A COLLECTION OF Miſcellanies:

Conſiſting of

POEMS, ESSAYS, DISCOURSES & LETTERS,

Occaſionally Written.

By *JOHN NORRIS*, Rector of *Bemerton* near *Sarum*.

——— *Diram qui contudit* Hydram.
Notaque Fatali *portenta labore ſubegit,*
Comperit Invidiam *ſupremo fine domari.*
Hor. Epiſt. Lib. 2. Epiſt. 1.

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TO THE
Honorable Leopold William Finch,
Warden of All-Souls-College.

SIR,

THE Greatneſs of your *Quality* and *Perſonal Worth*, conſider'd with that *Happy Relation* which has further endear'd you to us, gives you ſo juſt a Title to theſe Performances, that I could not without an heinous Alienation, devote them to any other Patron. And therefore, however my boldneſs may be tax'd for making you ſo *diſproportionable* a Preſent, yet certainly I ſhould have incurr'd more diſhonour by with-holding a *Debt*; and Preſumption is a leſs Crime than Injuſtice.

Sir, 'Tis by your kind Patronage and Protection (next to the favourable influences of a good Prince) that our Studies proſper, and our Laurels thrive and flouriſh, and that any of us are in a capacity to throw in the leaſt Symbol into the Muſes Exchequer. To whom then ſhould the Fruits of this Sacred Ground be offer'd, but to that Sun by whoſe genial influence they grow and ripen?

To you therefore I humbly preſent this Collection of *Miſcellanies*, for the entertainment of your leiſure hours, which were compoſed at ſome of mine. I ſhall not beg your *Protection* any farther than you ſhall find it worthy of it. I am only concern'd that you ſhould hence conclude how well your (now more than ever fortunate) Society ſtands affected towards you, particularly how much you are honour'd and eſteem'd by Sir,

Your humble, and moſt devoted Servant

JOHN NORRIS.

To the READER.

OF all the tedious things in the World, I was ever the leaſt Friend to long Prefaces; and therefore I ſhall only commend to your Hands this Collection of Miſcellanies, occaſionally compoſed at ſeveral times, as my Humour and Leiſure ſerv'd me, with a brief Account of my Deſign, as to both Parts of the Collection.

Not to trouble you with a Pompous Diſcourſe of the Nature of Poetry, its Meaſures of Criticiſm, its Variety, Antiquity, its great uſe and excellence, and the like, which have been at large ſet forth by many curious Pens, I have only leiſure at preſent to obſerve, that Poetry is of late mightily fall'n from the Beauty of its Idea, and from its ancient Majeſty and Grandeur, as well as Credit *and* Reputation.

It may appear ſtrange indeed, that in ſuch a Refining Age as this, wherein all things ſeem ready to receive their laſt turn and finiſhing ſtroke, Poetry ſhould be the only thing that remains unimprov'd. And yet ſo it happens, that which we generally have now a-days, is no more like the thing it was formerly, than Modern Religion *is like* Primitive Chriſtianity.

'Tis with this as with our Muſick. From grave, majeſtic, ſolemn ſtrains, where deep inſtructive Senſe is ſweetly convey'd in charming numbers, where equal Addreſs is made to the Judgment and the Imagination, and where Beauty and Strength go hand in hand, 'tis now for the moſt part dwindled down to light, frothy

ſtuff,

ſtuff, conſiſting either of mad extravagant Rants, or ſlight Witticiſms, and little amorous Conceits, fit only for a Tavern Entertainment; and that too among Readers of a Dutch *Palate.*

The truth is, this moſt Excellent and Divine Art has of late been ſo cheapned and depretiated by the bungling Performances of ſome who thought themſelves inſpired, and whoſe Readers too have been more kind to them than their Planets, that Poetry is almoſt grown out of Repute, and Men come ſtrongly prejudiced againſt any thing of this kind, as expecting nothing but Froth and Emptineſs; and to be a Poet, goes for little more than a Country Fidler.

But certainly he had once another Character, and that in as Nice and Wiſe an Age as this. If we may believe the great Horace *he was one,*

------Cui mens Divinior, atque Os
Magna locuturum ------

He had then his Temples ſurrounded with a Divine Glory, *ſpoke like the Oracle of the God of Wiſdom, and could deſcribe no Hero greater than himſelf. Poetry was once the* Miſtreſs *of all the Arts in the Circle, that which held the Rains of the World in her Hand, and which gave the firſt, and (if we may judge by the effects) perhaps the beſt Inſtitutes for the moralizing and governing the Paſſions of Mankind.*

The Deſign therefore of the preſent Undertaking, is to reſtore the declining Genius of Poetry to its Primitive and genuine Greatneſs, to wind up the Strings of the Muſes Lyre, and to ſhew that Senſe and Gracefulneſs are as conſiſtent in theſe as in any other Compoſitions.

I deſign here all the Maſculine Senſe and Argument of a Diſſertation, with the advantage of Poetic Fineneſs, Beauty and Spirit; and accordingly I have made choice for the moſt part of Divine and Moral Subjects; and if I meddle with any other ſort, I commonly turn the Stream another way, as particularly in thoſe Two Poems call'd Beauty and Love, which I have reſcued from thoſe ſordid Abuſes they have hitherto ſuffer'd.

I confeſs 'tis a difficult Province to make ſubſtantial maſſy Senſe yield to the ſoftneſs of Poetry; and accordingly we find there are few Poems after the Divine and Moral way, but what are ſtiff, flat and inſipid; but without this Mixture, Poetry is nothing worth; and when it has it, it has all it can have, and is withal ſo Divine a thing, that even Plato *I fancy, would give it Entertainment in his Common-wealth.*

I need not make any other Apology for my converſing with the Muſes; for I do not think it an Employment beneath the Character of a Scholar; and though I have now ſet up my outmoſt Pillar, yet I can't find in my heart to repent me of thoſe few blank hours beſtow'd in this Exerciſe. For I have the example of ſome of the greateſt and wiſeſt in all Ages to warrant me, and the greatneſs of Solomon *is ſeen as much in his Divine Paſtoral, the* Canticles, *as in his* Proverbs *or* Sermons; *and the wiſe* Ben-Sirach *among other Characters of his Heroes, puts in this among the reſt, that they were* ſuch as found out Muſical Tunes, and recited Verſes in writing, *Eccl.* 44. 5.

And thus much for the Verſe-part. Concerning the Eſſays *and* Diſcourſes, *I have only this to ſay, that I deſign'd in them as much Brevity and Clearneſs as are conſiſtent with each other, and to abound in Senſe rather*

ther than Words: I wiſh all Men would obſerve this in their Writings more than they do. I'm ſure the multitude of Books, *and the* ſhortneſs of Life *require it; and Senſe will lye in a little compaſs, if Men would be perſwaded to vent no Notions but what they are Maſters of; and were Angels to write, I fancy we ſhould have but few* Folio's.

This is what I deſign'd and endeavour'd in the whole. Whether I have attain'd it or no, I ſubmit to Judgment.

All-Souls Coll.
June 1. 1678.

J. Norris.

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The

The Paſſion of our Bleſſed Saviour, Repreſented in a Pindarique Ode.

——— *Quis talia fando*
Temperet a Lachrymis ? ———

I.

SAY *bold Licentious* Muſe,
What Noble Subject wilt thou chuſe ;
Of what great *Hero*, of what mighty Thing,
Wilt thou in boundleſs Numbers Sing ?
Sing the unfathom'd Depths of *Love*,
(For who the Wonders done by *Love* can tell,
By *Love*, which is it ſelf all Miracle ?)
Here in vaſt endleſs Circles may'ſt thou rove,
And like the Travelling Planet of the Day
In an Orb *unbounded* Stray.
Sing the great Miracle of Love *Divine*,
Great be thy *Genius*, ſparkling every Line,
Love's greateſt *Myſtery* reherſe :
Greater then that
Which on the teeming *Chaos* brooding ſate,
And *hatch'd* with kindly Heat, the Univerſe.
How *God* in Mercy choſe to Bleed, and Dye,
To reſcue Man from Miſery :
Man, not his Creature only, but his Enemy.

II.

Lo, in *Gethſemane*, I ſee him proſtrate lye,
Preſs'd with the Weight of his great Agony.
The Common Sluces of the Eyes
To Vent his Mighty Paſſion won't ſuffice,
His tortured Body Weeps *all-o're*,
And out of every Pore

Buds forth a precious Gem of Purple Gore.
How ſtrange the Power of Afflictions Rod
When in the Hand of an Incenſed God!
Like the Commanding Wand
In *Moſes's* Hand,
It works a Miracle, and turns the Flood
Of Tears into a *Sea* of *Blood.*
See with what *Pomp* Sorrow does now appear!
How Proud She is of being Seated here!
She never Wore
So Rich a Dye before.
Long was he willing to decline
Th' Encounter of the Wrath Divine.
Thrice he ſent for his Releaſe
Pathetick Embaſſies of Peace:
At length, his Courage overcame his Doubt,
Reſolv'd he was, and ſo the *Bloody Flag* hung out.

III.

And now the *Tragic Scene*'s diſplay'd,
Where drawn in full *Battalia* are laid
Before his Eyes,
That Numerous Hoſt of Miſeries
He muſt withſtand, that Map of Woe
Which he muſt undergo.
That heavy Wine-preſs which muſt by him be Trod,
The whole Artillery of God.
He ſaw that Face, whoſe very Sight
Chears Angels with its Beatific Light,
Contracted now into a dreadful Frown,
All Cloath'd with Thunder, Big with Death
And Showers of hot burning Wrath,
Which ſhortly muſt be poured down.
He ſaw a Black and Diſmal Scroll,
Of Sins paſt, preſent, and to come,
With their intolerable Doom
Which would the more Oppreſs his *ſpotleſs* Soul;
As th' Elements are Weighty proved,
When from their Native Station they're removed.

He

He ſaw the Foul Ingratitude of thoſe,
Who would the Labours of his Love oppoſe;
And reap no Benefit by all his Agonies.
He ſaw all this,
And as he ſaw, to Waver he began,
And almoſt to Repent of his great Love for Man.

IV.

When lo, a Heavenly Form all Bright and Fair,
Swifter than Thought, ſhot through th' enlighten'd Air:
He who ſat next th' *Imperial* Throne,
And read the Councels of the Great *Three-One*,
Who in Eternity's Myſterious Glaſs,
Saw both what was, what is, and what muſt come to paſs;
He came with Reverence profound,
And rais'd his *proſtrate Maker* from the Ground;
Wiped off the Bloody Sweat
With which his Face and Garments too were Wet:
And comforted his Dark *benighted* Mind,
With Sovereign Cordials of Light refin'd.
This done, in ſoft Addreſſes he began
To Fortifie his kind Deſigns for Man:
Unſeal'd to him the Book of God's Decree,
And ſhew'd him what *muſt* be:
Alledg'd the Truth of Propheſies,
Types, Figures, and Myſteries;
How needful it was to ſupply,
With Humane Race, the Ruins of the Sky.
How this would new Acceſſion bring
To the Celeſtial Quire;
And how withall, it would inſpire
New Matter for the Praiſe of the great King.
How he ſhould ſee the *Travail of his Soul*, and Bleſs
Thoſe Sufferings which had ſo good Succeſs.
How great the Triumphs of his Victory,
How glorious his *Aſcent* would be,
What *weighty* Bliſs in Heaven he ſhould obtain
By a few Hours of Pain;
Where to Eternal Ages he ſhould Reign.

He ſpake, Confirm'd in Mind the Champion ſtood;
A Spirit Divine
Through the Thick Veil of Fleſh did ſhine:
All-over Powerful he was, All-over Good.
Pleas'd with his ſucceſsful Flight,
The Officious Angel Poſts away
To the bright Regions of Eternal Day;
Departing in a Track of Light.
In haſte for News, the Heavenly People ran,
And joy'd to hear the hopeful State of Man.

V.

And now that ſtrange prodigious hour,
When God muſt Subject be to Humane Power;
That Hour is come,
Th' unerring Clock of Fate has Struck;
'Twas heard below down to Hell's loweſt Room,
And ſtrait th' Infernal Powers th' appointed Signal took.
Open the Scene, my Muſe, and ſee
Wonders of Impudence and Villany;
How wicked Mercenary Hands,
Dare to Invade him whom they ſhould Adore;
With Swords and Staves, encompaſs'd round he ſtands,
Who knew no other Guards but thoſe of Heaven before.
Once with his Powerful Breath, he did repell
The Rude Aſſaults of Hell.
A Ray of his Divinity
Shot forth with that bold Anſwer, *I am He:*
They Reel and Stagger, and Fall to the Ground;
For God was in the Sound.
The Voice of God was once again,
Walking in the Garden, heard:
And once again, was by the Guilty Hearers fear'd:
Trembling ſeiz'd every Joynt, and Chilneſs every Vein.
This little Victory he won,
Shew'd what he could have done.
But He to whom as Chief was given,
The whole *Militia* of Heaven,
That *Mighty* He,
Declines all Guards for his Defence, But

But that of his inſeparable Innocence;
And quietly gives up his Liberty.
He's Seiz'd on by the Military Bands,
With Cords they Bind his Sacred Hands:
But ah! how Weak, What Nothings would they prove,
Were he not held by ſtronger Ones of Love.

VI.

Once more, my weary'd Muſe, thy Pinions Try,
And reach the Top of *Calvary*.
A Steep Aſcent: But moſt to him who bore
The Burthen of a Croſs this Way before.
(The Croſs Aſcends, there's ſomething in it ſure
That Moral is and Myſtical;
No Heights of Fortune are from thee ſecure,
Afflictions ſometimes Climb, as well as Fall.)
Here Breathe a while, and view
The dolefull'ſt Picture Sorrow ever Drew:
The Lord of Life, Heavens Darling Son,
The Great, th' Almighty One,
With Out-ſtretch'd Arms, Nail'd to a Curſed Tree,
Crown'd with Sharp Thorns, Cover'd with Infamy;
He who before
So many Miracles had done,
The Lives of Others to Reſtore,
Does with a greater, loſe his Own.
Full Three long Hours his Tender Body did ſuſtain,
Moſt exquiſite and poignant Pain.
So long the Sympathizing Sun his Light withdrew,
And *wonder'd* how the Stars their *dying* Lord could View.

VII.

This ſtrange Defect of Light,
Does all the Sages in Aſtronomy Affright,
With Fears of an Eternal Night.
Th' Intelligences in their Courſes Stray,
And Travellers below miſtake their Way;
Wond'ring to be benighted in the midſt of Day.
Each Mind is ſeiz'd with Horror and Deſpair,
And more o'reſpread with Darkneſs than the Air.

Fear on, 'tis Wondrous all, and New;
'Tis what paſt Ages never knew.
Fear on, but yet you'll find,
The great Eclipſe is ſtill behind.
The Luſtre of the Face Divine,
Does on the Mighty Sufferer no longer ſhine.
God hides his Glories from his Sight,
With a Thick Skreen made of Hell's groſſeſt Night.
Cloſe-wrought it was, and Solid, all
Compacted and Subſtantial;
Impenetrable to the Beatifick Light:
Without Complaint, He bore
The Tortures he endur'd before;
But now, no longer able to Contain,
Under the great Hyperbole of Pain,
He Mourns, and with a ſtrong Pathetick Cry,
Laments the ſad Deſertion of the Deity.
Here Stop, my Muſe, Stop and Admire,
The Breather of all Life does now Expire:
His Milder Father Summons Him away;
His Breath Obediently he does Reſign:
Angels to Paradiſe his Soul convey;
And Calm the Relicts of his Grief with Hymns Divine.

Annotations.

THis Ode is after the Pindarick Way; which is the higheſt and moſt magnificent Kind of Writing in Verſe; and conſequently, fit only for great and noble Subjects; ſuch as are as Boundleſs as its own Numbers: The Nature of which is to be Looſe and Free; and not to keep one ſettled Pace; but ſometimes like a gentle Stream, to glide along Peaceably within its own Channel; and ſometimes, like an impetuous Torrent, to Roll on Extravagantly,

travagantly, and carry all before it. Agreeable to that Description of *Horace:*

Nunc pace delabentis Hetruscum
In mare, nunc lapides adesos
Stirpesque raptas & pecus & domos
Volventis una non sine montium,
Clamore vicinaque Sylvæ.

And this may serve to Explain the Introduction of the Poem:

And Hatch'd with kindly Heat the Universe.

Love in the *Gentile Theology*, is made the most Antient of the Gods, and the Sire of all Things. ἵνα παντα δι' ἐκεῖνον μετάχη γενέσεως, says *Plutarch*. And it is described by *Simmias Rhodius*, in a Pair of Wings, which suited well with the Symbolical Representation of the *Chaos* by an Egg; which was Brooded and Hatch'd under these Wings of Love. This whole Matter is rarely well, and at large express'd by *Aristophanes* in *Avibus*. The plain and undisguised Meaning of it is this, That the Creation of the World was the Effect of the Divine Love; God having no other End in it besides the Communication of his own Happiness.

As th' Elements are Weighty proved,
When from their Native Station they're removed.

This is according to the *Aristotelean Hypothesis*, that the Elements are not Heavy in their own Places; which whether it be true or no, I shall not now Dispute. However, it serves for an Illustration, which is sufficient for my present purpose.

He saw the foul Ingratitude of those, &c.

The bitter Ingredients of our Lord's Cup mention'd

 hitherto,

hitherto, were taken from Things relating to his own Perſonal Concern. But this laſt Motive of his Sorrow proceeds wholly on the Behalf of Others; of whoſe Final Impenitence he is ſuppos'd to have a foreſight. This I take to be a good and proper inſinuation of the Excellency of our Bleſſed Lord's Temper, his exceeding great Love and *Philanthropy*, when among the other Ingredients of his Paſſion this is ſuppoſed to be One, That there would be ſome, who, by their own Default, would receive no Benefit from it.

Unſeal'd to him the Book of God's Decree, &c.

Whether the Angel uſed theſe Topicks of Conſolation or no, is a thing as indifferent to my purpoſe, as 'tis *uncertain*. In the Scripture it is only ſaid in general, That *there appear'd an Angel from Heaven ſtrengthning him*. However, theſe Arguments are ſuch as are probable and pertinent; and that's ſufficient.

In haſte for News the Heavenly People ran,
And joy'd to hear the hopeful State of Man.

It is highly reaſonable to believe, that thoſe Bleſſed and Excellent Spirits, who out of their Compaſſionate Love and Concern for Mankind, Uſher'd in the News of our Saviour's Nativity, with *Anthems* of Praiſe and Thankſgiving; and are ſaid likewiſe, to Rejoyce at the Converſion of a Sinner, were alſo mightily Tranſported with Joy, when they underſtood that our Saviour, notwithſtanding the Reluctancy of Innocent Nature, was at length fully reſolv'd to undertake the Price of our Redemption.

Full

Full three long Hours his Tender Body did ſuſtain,
Moſt exquiſite and poignant Pain.

It is ſuppoſed by the Antient Fathers, that the Sufferings which our Bleſſed Saviour underwent in his Body, were more Afflictive to him than the ſame would have been to another Man, upon the account of the excellency and quickneſs of his Senſe of Feeling: And this Opinion I take to be as *reaſonable*, as 'tis *pious*. For ſince, according to the Principles of Philoſophy, the Senſe of Feeling ariſes from the proportion of the firſt Qualities, it follows, that the better the Complexion or Temperament of any Man is, the better his Feeling muſt needs be. Now 'tis very reaſonable to believe, that that Man who was to be ſubſtantially united to the *Godhead*, and who was begotten by the miraculous *overſhadowings* of the holy Spirit, ſhould have a Body endow'd with the beſt Complexion, and moſt noble *Harmony* of Qualities that could be, that ſo it might be a ſuitable Organ for his excellent Soul. And if ſo, then it follows, that the Fleſh of our Lord's Body was ſo Soft and Tender, and his Feeling ſo exquiſitely Quick and Senſible, as never any Man's was before: And conſequently, the ſevere uſages which he underwent, not only at his *Paſſion*, but throughout his *whole* Life, muſt needs be in a *Singular* manner Afflictive to him. And hence appears the Vanity of their Opinion, who are little or nothing affected with the Conſideration of our Lord's Paſſion, becauſe they think it was made Light to him, by reaſon of his Union with the *Godhead*. 'Twas eaſie for him (ſome inconſiderate Perſons are ready to ſay) to ſuffer this or this; for he was God, and not meer Man, as we are. True, he

was

was ſo; but his being God did no way leſſen the Puniſhment he underwent as *Man*, but only ſupported him in his *Exiſtence* under it, in the ſame manner as God is ſuppoſed, by an Act of his Almighty Power, to preſerve the Bodies of the *Damn'd*, *incorruptible* among the *Everlaſting Burnings*. But this I think is no *Kindneſs* to them. Neither did the Society of the Divine Nature any more diminiſh the Sufferings of our deareſt Lord; nay, in one reſpect it proved an *accidental aggravation* to them, becauſe upon the account of this Noble Union, he had given him a Body of a moſt admirable Complexion and Harmonious Temperature, and conſequently of a Fleſh exceeding tender, and moſt exquiſitely Perceptive of the leaſt Impreſſions.

So long the Sympathizing Sun his Light withdrew,
And wonder'd how the Stars their dying Lord could view.

The *Eclipſe* which accompany'd the Paſſion of our Saviour was ſo remarkable and miraculous, that 'twas taken notice of by many of the *Gentile* Hiſtorians. There are three things which made this Eclipſe ſo very remarkable, the time of its *Appearance*, the time of its *Duration*, and the *Degree* of it. 1. For the time of its Appearance, it was at *full Moon*, when the Moon was not in *Conjunction* with, but in Oppoſition to the Sun. And this appears not only from the Teſtimony of *Dionyſius*, who affirms that he ſaw it at that time, but alſo from the time of our Lord's *Paſſion*, which, according to the Relation of the *Evangeliſt*, was at the Celebration of the *Paſſover*. Now the *Jews* were bound to celebrate the *Paſchal* Solemnity always at Full Moon;

as

as is to be ſeen in the twelfth of *Exodus*. This was no time therefore for a *Natural* Eclipſe, becauſe 'twas impoſſible that the Moon ſhould then interpoſe betwixt us and the Sun. 2. For the time of its *Duration*, it was full three Hours; which is another Evidence that this was no *Natural* Eclipſe: For the *Natural* Eclipſe of the Sun can never laſt ſo long, both becauſe of the great diſproportion between the Sun's Magnitude, and that of the Moon, and becauſe of the ſwift Motion of the *luster*. 3. For the *degree* of it, it was a *total* Eclipſe. The Sun was ſo darkned, that (as Hiſtorians report, who Write of that Eclipſe) the *Stars* appear'd. And that is another Argument that it was no *Natural Phænomenon*, it being impoſſible that the Body of the Moon, which is ſo infinitely leſs than that of the Sun, ſhould totally Eclipſe it. Now all theſe three Remarkables are compriſed in the compaſs of theſe two Verſes. For in that it is ſaid that the *Sun withdrew his Light*, it is intimated that the Light of the Sun was not *intercepted* by the ordinary *Conjunction* of the Moon, but that by an Extraordinary *Commiſſion* from the God of Nature, the Sun *reign'd* in his Light, and *ſuſpended* the Emiſſion of his Beams. And this denotes the time of its *appearance*, (*viz.*) when the Moon was not in *Conjunction*. The time of its *duration* is implied by the words, *So long*. And laſtly, the *Degree* of it is implied in the laſt Verſe, Where the Appearance of the Stars is not *directly* expreſs'd, but only *inſinuated* and *couch'd*, for the more Elegancy of the Thought.

And calm the Relicts of his Grief with Hymns divine.

It

It is here ſuppoſed that the Paſſion of our Saviour was now over, and his Father's Wrath wholly appeas'd. For I can by no means approve the Opinion of thoſe who fancy that our Saviour, in the interim betwixt his Death and Reſurrection, deſcended *locally* into Hell, there to ſuffer the Torments of the Damn'd. His own Words upon the Croſs, *It is finiſh'd*; His Promiſe to the penitent Thief, that he ſhould be with him that Day in *Paradice*; and his laſt *reſignation* of his Spirit into the Hands of his Father, do all of them apparently contradict it. But yet, though the *bitter Cup* was wholly drank off upon the Croſs, 'tis natural to imagine ſome little *Reliſh* of it to remain behind for a time. Though all his Sufferings and *penal* Inflictions were ended before his Death, yet, I ſuppoſe (and I think very naturally) ſome little *diſcompoſures* of Mind, remaining like the *after-droppings* of a Shower, which his Soul could not immediately ſhake off, upon her releaſe from the Body. In alluſion to that of *Virgil*,

Inter quas Phœniſſa recens a vulnere Dido
Errabat Sylva in Magna——

Where the Poet fancies the Ghoſt of *Dido* being newly releas'd from the Pains of Love, could not preſently forget her *ſhady* Walks and *melancholly* Retirements: Now theſe *Remains* of Sorrow and *After-diſturbances* of Mind which cleav'd to the Soul of the *Holy Jeſus*, I ſuppoſe here to be allay'd by the *Muſick* of Angels in his *paſſage* to *Paradice*.

An Hymn upon the TRANSFIGURATION.

I.

HAil *King of Glory*, clad in Robes of Light,
Out-ſhining all we here call bright:
Hail Light's divineſt *Galaxy*,
Hail *Expreſs Image* of the *Deity*.
Could now thy *Amorous Spouſe* thy Beauties view,
How would her wounds all bleed anew!
Lovely thou art all o're and bright,
Thou *Iſrael's Glory*, and thou *Gentile's Light*.

II.

But whence this brightneſs, whence this ſuddain day?
Who did thee thus with Light array?
Did thy *Divinity* diſpence
T' its *Conſort* a more *liberal* influence?
Or did ſome Curious Angel's *Chymick* Art
The *Spirits* of pureſt light impart,
Drawn from the *Native Spring* of Day,
And wrought into an *Organized* Ray?

III.

How e're 'twas done, 'tis Glorious and Divine,
Thou doſt with *radiant wonders* ſhine.
The Sun with his bright Company,
Are all *groſs Meteors* if compar'd to thee.
Thou art the Fountain whence their Light does flow,
But to thy *will* thine *own* doſt owe.
For (as at firſt) thou didſt but ſay, (day.
Let there be light, and ſtrait ſprang forth this wondrous

IV.

Let now the *Eaſtern Princes* come and bring
Their *Tributary* Offering.
There needs no *Star* to guide their flight,
They'll find thee now, *great King*, by thine *own* light.
And thou, my Soul, adore, love, and admire,
And *follow* this *bright Guide* of *Fire*.
Do thou thy *Hymns* and *Praiſes* bring
Whil'ſt Angels with *Veil'd Faces*, Anthems ſing.

The

The PARTING.

I.

DEpart! The Sentence of the *Damn'd* I hear;
Compendious grief, and *black* deſpair.
I now believe the *Schools* with eaſe,
(Tho once an *happy Infidel*)
That ſhould the *Senſe* to torment ſeize,
Yet *Pain* of *Loſs* alone would make a *Hell*.

II.

Take all, ſince me of this you Gods deprive,
'Tis hardly now worth while to live.
Nought in *exchange* can grateful prove,
No ſecond Friendſhip can be found
To match my mourning *Widow'd* Love;
Eden is loſt, the reſt's but *common* ground.

III.

Why are the *greateſt Bleſſings* ſent in vain,
Which muſt be loſt with *greater pain*?
Or why do we fondly admire
The greateſt good which *life* can boaſt?
When Fate will have the *Bliſs expire*,
Like *Life*, with painful *Agonies* 'tis loſt.

IV.

How fading are the Joves we dote upon,
Like *Apparitions ſeen* and *gone*:
But thoſe which ſooneſt take their flight,
Are the moſt *exquiſite* and *ſtrong*.
Like *Angels* viſits, *ſhort* and *bright*;
Mortality's too *weak* to bear them *long*.

V.

No pleaſure certainly is ſo divine
As when two Souls in Love combine:
He has the *ſubſtance* of all bliſs,
To whom a Vertuous *Friend* is given,
So ſweet harmonious Friendſhip is,
Add but *Eternity*, you'll make it *Heaven*.

VI.

The *Minutes* in your Converſation ſpent
Were *Feſtivals* of true content.
Here, here, an *Ark* of pleaſing *reſt*,
My Soul had found that *reſtleſs Dove*,
My *preſent* State methought was *beſt*,
I envy'd none *below*, ſcarce thoſe *above*.

VII.

But now the better part of me is gone,
My Sun is *ſet*, my Turtle *flown*.
Tho here and there of *leſſer* bliſs
Some *twinkling* Stars give *feeble* light,
Still there a mournful *darkneſs* is,
They ſhine but juſt enough to ſhew 'tis *night*.

VIII.

Fatal divorce! What have I done amiſs,
To bear ſuch miſery as this?
The World yields now no real good,
All happineſs is now become
But *painted* and *deluding* food:
As meer a *Fiction* as *Elyſium*.

IX.

Well then, ſince nothing elſe can pleaſe my taſte,
I'll *ruminate* on pleaſures *paſt*.
So when with glorious Viſions bleſt,
The waking *Hermit* finds no Theme
That's grateful to his thoughtful Breaſt,
He ſweetly *recollects* his pleaſing *Dream*.

To a Lady, who asked him, What Life was?

'Tis not becauſe I *breathe* and *eat*,
'Tis not becauſe a vigorous heat
Drives *round* my Blood, and does impart
Motion to my Pulſe and Heart:
'Tis not ſuch proofs as theſe can give
Any aſſurance that I *Live*:

No, no, to *Live* is to *enjoy*;
What marrs our *bliſs* does *Life* deſtroy:
The days which paſs without *Content*,
Are not *liv'd* properly, but *ſpent*.
Who ſays the Damn'd in Hell do *Live*?
That word we to the *Bleſſed* give:
The *Sum* of all whoſe happineſs
We by the Name of *Life* expreſs.
Well then, if this account be true,
To *Live* is ſtill to Live with *You*.

The third Chapter of Job *Paraphraſed.*

I.

CUrs'd, ever curs'd be that unhappy day,
When firſt the Sun's unwelcom ray
I ſaw with *trembling* Eyes, being newly come
From the *dark* Priſon of the *Womb*.
When firſt to me my vital Breath was lent,
That Breath which now muſt *all* in *ſighs* be ſpent.

II.

Let not the Sun his chearing Beams diſplay
Upon that *wretched*, *wretched* day;
But mourn in *Sables*, and all over ſhroud
His glories in a *ſullen* cloud.
Let light to *upper* Regions be confin'd,
And all *below* as Black as is my *Mind*.

III.

Curs'd be the Night which firſt began to lay
The *Ground-work* of this Houſe of Clay;
Let it not have the Honour to appear
In the *Retinue* of the Year.
Let all the Days ſhun its Society,
Hate, *curſe*, *abandon* it as much as I.

IV

Let Melancholy call that Night her own,
Then let her ſigh, then let her groan:

A general grief throughout all Nature ſpread,
With folded Arms, and drooping Head.
All Harps be ſtill, or tun'd to ſuch a ſtrain
As *Fiends* might hear, and yet not eaſe their Pain.

V.

Let neither Moon nor Stars, with borrow'd light,
Checquer the blackneſs of that Night:
But let a pure *unqueſtion'd* Darkneſs rear
Her *Sooty* Wings all o're the Air;
Such as once on th' *Abyſs* of *Chaos* lay,
Not to be *pierc'd* by *Stars*, ſcarce by the *edge* of *Day*.

VI.

Why was there then, ah, why a paſſage free
At once for Life and Miſery?
Why did I not uncloiſter'd from the Womb
Take my next Lodging in a Tomb?
Why with ſuch cruel tenderneſs and care
Was I nurs'd up to Sorrow and Deſpair?

VII.

For now in ſweet Repoſe might I have lain
Secure from any Grief or Pain:
Untouch'd with Care, my Bed I ſhould have made
In Death's cool and refreſhing Shade.
I ſhould have ſlept now in a happy Place,
All calm and ſilent as the Empty ſpace.

VIII.

There where great *Emperours* their Heads lay down,
Tir'd with the Burthen of a Crown.
There where the Mighty, Popular and Great,
Are happy in a dear Retreat;
Enjoy that ſolid Peace which here in vain,
In Grotts and ſhady *Walks* they ſought t' obtain.

IX.

None of Hells Agents can or dare moleſt
This awful Sanctuary of Reſt.
No Priſoners ſighs, no groanings of the Slave,
Diſturb the *quiet* of the *Grave*.

From Toil and Labour here they ever ceaſe,
And keep a *Sabbath* of ſweet *Reſt* and *Peace*.

X.

Why then does *Heaven* on Mortals Life beſtow
When 'tis thus *overtax'd* with woe?
Why am I forc'd to live againſt my *Will*,
When all the *Good* is loſt in *Ill?*
My Sighs flow thick, my Groans ſound from afar,
Like falling Waters to the Traveller.

Seraphick Love.

I.

'Tis true, *Frail Beauty*, I did once reſign
To thy *imperious* Charms this Heart of mine:
There didſt thou undiſturb'd thy Scepter ſway,
And I methought was *pleas'd* t' obey.
Thou ſeem'ſt ſo lovely, ſo divine,
With ſuch ſweet Graces didſt thou ſhine,
Thou entertain'ſt my *Amorous* ſenſe
With ſuch *Harmonious* Excellence,
That, Credulous and Silly I,
With *vain*, with *impious* Idolatry,
Ador'd that *Star* which was to lead me to the *Deity*.

II.

But now, thou ſoft *Enchantreſs* of the Mind,
Farewel, a change, a mighty change I find;
The Empire of my Heart thou muſt reſign,
For I can be no longer *thine*.
A Nobler, a Diviner Gueſt,
Has took poſſeſſion of my Breaſt;
He has, and muſt *engroſs* it all,
And yet the Room is ſtill too *ſmall*.
In vain you tempt my Heart to rove,
A fairer Object now my Soul does move,
It muſt be all *Devotion*, what before was Love.

III. Through

III.

Through *Contemplation's Optics* I have ſeen
Him who is *Fairer than the Sons of Men:*
The *Source* of good, the light *Archetypall*,
Beauty in the *Original.*
The faireſt of ten thouſand, He,
Proportion all and Harmony.
All *Mortal Beauty's* but a Ray
Of his bright ever-ſhining Day;
A little *feeble twinkling* Star,
Which now the Sun's in place muſt diſappear;
There is but One that's Good, there is but One that's Fair.

IV.

To thee, thou *only Fair*, my Soul aſpires
With *Holy Breathings*, *languiſhing* Deſires.
To thee m' *inamour'd*, *panting* Heart does move,
By *Efforts* of *Ecſtatic* Love.
How do thy glorious ſtreams of Light
Refreſh my intellectual ſight!
Tho broken, and ſtrain'd through a Skreen
Of envious Fleſh that ſtands between!
When ſhall m' impriſon'd Soul be free,
That ſhe thy Native Uncorrected Light may ſee,
And gaze upon thy *Beatifick* Face to all Eternity?

The RETIREMENT.

I.

WEll, I have thought on't, and I find,
This *buſie World* is Nonſenſe all;
I here deſpair to pleaſe my Mind,
Her ſweeteſt *Honey* is ſo mixt with *Gall.*
Come then, I'll try how 'tis to be alone,
Live to my ſelf a while, and be my own.

II.

I've try'd, and bleſs the happy change;
So happy, I could almoſt vow

Never from this Retreat to range,
For ſure I ne'r can be ſo bleſt as now.
From all th' allays of Bliſs I here am free,
I pity others, and none envy me.

III.

Here in this ſhady lonely Grove,
I ſweetly think my hours away,
Neither with Buſineſs vex'd, nor Love,
Which in the *World* bear ſuch *Tyrannick* ſway:
No Tumults can my *cloſe Apartment find*,
Calm as thoſe *Seats above*, which know no *Storm* nor *Wind*.

IV.

Let *Plots* and *News* embroil the State,
Pray what's that to my *Books* and *Me?*
Whatever be the *Kingdom*'s Fate,
Here I am ſure t' *enjoy* a *Monarchy*.
Lord of my ſelf, accountable to none,
Like the firſt Man in *Paradiſe*, alone.

V.

While the *Ambitious vainly* ſue,
And of the *partial* Stars complain,
I ſtand upon the *Shore* and view
The mighty *Labours* of the diſtant *Main*,
I'm fluſh'd with *ſilent* joy, and ſmile to ſee
The Shafts of *Fortune* ſtill drop *ſhort* of *Me*.

VI.

Th' *uneaſie Pageantry* of State,
And all the *Plagues* to *Thought* and *Senſe*
Are far remov'd; I'm plac'd by Fate
Out of the *Road* of all *Impertinence*.
Thus, tho my *fleeting* Life runs *ſwiftly* on,
'Twill not be *ſhort*, becauſe 'tis *all* my *own*.

The INFIDEL.

I.

FArewel *Fruition*, thou grand *Cruel* Cheat,
Which firſt our hopes doſt *raiſe* and then *defeat*.
Farewel thou *Midwife* to *Abortive* Bliſs,
Thou *Myſtery* of Fallacies.
Diſtance preſents the Object fair,
With Charming Features and a graceful Air,
But when we come to *ſeize* th' inviting prey,
Like a *Shy Ghoſt*, it vaniſhes away.

II.

So to th' *unthinking* Boy the diſtant Sky
Seems on ſome Mountain's Surface to rely;
He with *Ambitious* haſte climbs the aſcent,
Curious to touch the *Firmament*:
But when with an unweary'd pace
Arriv'd he is at the *long-wiſh'd-for* place,
With Sighs the ſad defeat he does deplore,
His *Heaven* is *ſtill* as *diſtant* as *before*.

III.

And yet 'twas long e're I could *throughly* ſee
This grand Impoſtor's *frequent* Treachery.
Tho often Fool'd, yet I ſhould ſtill dream on
Of Pleaſure in *Reverſion*.
Tho ſtill he did my hopes *deceive*,
His fair Pretenſions I would ſtill *believe*.
Such was my *Charity*, that tho I knew
And found him *falſe*, yet I would think him *true*.

IV.

But now he ſhall no more with *ſhews* deceive,
I will no more *enjoy*, no more *believe*.
Th' *unwary Jugler* has ſo often ſhewn
His *Fallacies*, that now they'r known.
Shall I *truſt* on? the Cheat is plain,
I will not be impos'd upon again.

I'll view the *Bright Appearance* from *afar*,
But never try to *catch* the falling Star.

On a Muſician, ſuppoſed to be mad with Muſick.

I.

POOR dull miſtake of low Mortality,
To call that Madneſs, which is Ecſtacy.
'Tis no diſorder of the Brain,
His Soul is only ſet t' an higher ſtrain.
Out-ſoar he does the Sphere of Common Senſe,
Rais'd to Diviner Excellence;
But when at higheſt pitch, his Soul out-flies,
Not Reaſon's Bounds, but thoſe of vulgar Eyes.

II.

So when the *Myſtick Sibyl*'s Sacred Breaſt
Was with *Divine Infuſions* poſſeſt,
'Twas *Rage* and *Madneſs* thought to be,
Which was all *Oracle* and *Myſtery*.
And ſo the Soul that's ſhortly to *Commence*
A Spirit *free* from dregs of Senſe,
Is thought to *rave*, when She diſcourſes high,
And *breathes* the *lofty Strains* of *Immortality*.

III.

Muſick, thou *Generous Ferment* of the Soul,
Thou univerſal *Cement* of the *whole*;
Thou *Spring* of Paſſion, that doſt inſpire
Religious Ardours, and *Poetick Fire*,
Who'd think that *Madneſs* ſhould b' aſcrib'd to thee,
That *mighty Diſcord* to thy *Harmony*?
But 'twas *ſuch ignorance* that call'd the Gift Divine
Of *Various Tongues*, *Rage*, and th' *Effects* of *Wine*.

IV.

But thou, *Seraphick* Soul, do thou advance
In thy ſweet *Ecſtacy*, thy *pleaſing* Trance:
Let thy brisk Paſſions mount ſtill higher,
Till they join to the *Element* of *Fire*.

Soar

Soar higher yet, till thou ſhalt calmly hear
The Muſick of a well-tun'd Sphere:
Then on the *lumpiſh Maſs* look down, and thou ſhalt know
The *Madneſs* of the *World*, for groveling ſtill below.

The CONSOLATION.

I.

I Grant 'tis bad, but there is ſome relief
In the *Society* of Grief.
'Tis ſweet to him that *mourns* to ſee
A whole Houſe clad in Sorrow's Livery.
Grief in *Communion* does *remiſs* appear,
Like *harſher* ſounds in *Conſort*, which *leſs* grate the Ear.

II.

Men would not Curſe the Stars, did they diſpenſe
In *common* their ill Influence.
Let none be *Rich*, and Poverty
Would not be thought ſo great a Miſery.
Our diſcontent is from *compariſon*;
Were better States *unſeen*, each Man would like his *own*.

III.

Should *partial* Seas *wreck* my poor Ship *alone*,
I might with cauſe my Fate bemoan.
But ſince before I *ſink*, I ſee
A *Numerous Fleet* of Ships deſcend with me,
Why don't I with *content* my Breath reſign?
I will, and in the *greater* Ruine *bury* mine.

The CHOICE.

Stet quicunque volet potens
Aulæ culmine lubrico, &c.

I.

NO, I ſhan't envy him, who'er he be,
That ſtands upon the *Battlements* of State;
Stand there who will for me,
I'd rather be *ſecure* than *great*.
Of being ſo *high* the *pleaſure* is but *ſmall*,
But *long the Ruin*, if I chance to *fall*.

II.

Let me in ſome ſweet Shade *ſerenely lye*,
Happy in *leiſure* and *obſcurity*;
Whilſt others place their joys
In *Popularity* and *Noiſe*.
Let my ſoft Minutes *glide obſcurely* on,
Like *ſubterraneous* Streams, *unheard*, *unknown*.

III.

Thus when my Days are all in *ſilence* paſt,
A good *plain-Country-Man* I'll dye at laſt.
Death cannot chuſe but be
To him a *mighty* Miſery,
VVho to the *World* was *popularly* known,
And dies a *Stranger* to *himſelf alone*.

The MEDITATION.

I.

IT muſt be done (my Soul) but 'tis a ſtrange,
A diſmal and *Myſterious* Change,
VVhen thou ſhalt leave this *Tenement* of Clay,
And to an *unknown ſomewhere* wing away;
VVhen *Time* ſhall be *Eternity*, and thou (how.
Shalt *be* thou know'ſt not *what*, and *live* thou know'ſt not

II. *Amazing*

II.

Amazing State! No wonder that we dread
To *think* of *Death*, or *view* the *Dead*.
Thou'rt all wrapt up in Clouds, as if to thee
Our very *Knowledge* had *Antipathy*.
Death could not a more *Sad* Retinue find,
Sickneſs and *Pain before*, and *Darkneſs* all *behind*.

III.

Some Courteous Ghoſt, tell this *great Secrecy*,
What 'tis you *are*, and we *muſt* be.
You warn us of *approaching* Death, and why
May we not know from you what 'tis to *Dye*?
But you, having *ſhot* the Gulph, delight to ſee
Succeeding Souls *plunge* in with *like Uncertainty*.

IV.

When Life's cloſe Knot by *Writ* from Deſtiny,
Diſeaſe ſhall cut, or *Age unty*;
When after ſome *Delays*, ſome *dying* Strife,
The Soul ſtands *ſhivering* on the *Ridge* of Life;
With what a *dreadful Curioſity*
Does ſhe *launch* out into the Sea of vaſt *Eternity*!

V.

So when the Spacious Globe was delug'd o'er,
And *lower* Holds could ſave no more,
On th' *utmoſt* Bough th' aſtoniſh'd Sinners ſtood,
And view'd th' *Advances* of th' *encroaching* Flood.
O'ertopp'd at length by th' Element's Encreaſe,
With *Horrour* they reſign'd to the *untry'd Abyſs*.

The IRRECONCILABLE.

I.

I Little thought (my *Damon*) once, that *you*
Could prove, (and what is more, to *me*) *untrue*.
Can I *forget* ſuch *Treachery*, and *Live*?
Mercy it ſelf would not this Crime forgive.

Heaven's

Heaven's Gates refuſe to let *Apoſtates* in,
No, that's the *Great unpardonable Sin.*

II.

Did you not Vow by all the Powers above,
That you could none but *dear Orinda* love?
Did you not ſwear by all that is Divine,
That you would *only* be and *ever* mine?
You did, and yet you live *ſecurely* too,
And think that *Heaven*'s *falſe* as well as *you.*

III.

Believe me, *Love*'s a thing *much* too *divine*
Thus to be *Ap'd*, and made a mere *Deſign.*
'Tis no leſs Crime than *Treaſon* here to *feign*,
'Tis Counterfeiting of a *Royal Coin.*
But ah! *Hypocriſy*'s no where ſo common grown
As in *Moſt Sacred Things*, *Love* and *Religion.*

IV.

Go ſeek *new Conqueſts*, go, you have my Leave,
You ſhall not *Grieve* her whom you could *deceive.*
I don't *lament*, but *pity* what you do,
Nor take that Love as *loſt*, which ne'r was *true.*
The way that's left you to *befriend* my Fate,
Is now to prove *more conſtant* in your *Hate.*

The ADVICE.

Prudens futuri temporis exitum
Caliginoſa nocte premit Deus. Hor.

I.

WHat's *forming* in the *Womb* of Fate
Why art thou ſo concern'd to know?
Doſt think 'twou'd be *Advantage* to thy State?
But *Wiſer* Heaven does not think it ſo.
With thy *Content* thou would'ſt this Knowledge *buy*,
No Part of Life thou'dſt pleaſant find
For dread of what thou ſee'ſt behind,
Thou would'ſt but *taſt* of the *inlightning* Fruit and *Dye.*

II. Well

II.

Well then, has Heaven Events to come
Hid with the *blackeſt* Veil of Night;
But ſtill in vain if we *foreſtall* our Doom,
And with *Prophetick* Fears our ſelves affright:
Grand Folly! whether thus 'twill be or no
We Know not, and yet ſilly Man
Secures his Evils what he can, (Blow.
And *ſtabs* himſelf with Grief, leſt Fate ſhould *miſs* the

III.

Be Wiſe, and let it be thy Care
To manage well the *preſent* Hour;
Call home thy ranging Thoughts and fix them *here*,
This only Mind, this only's in thy *Power*.
The reſt no ſetled, ſteddy Courſe maintain,
Like Rivers, which now gently ſlide
Within their Bounds, now with full Tide
O'erflow, whom Houſes, Cattel, Trees reſiſt in vain.

IV.

'Tis He that's happy, he alone
Lives free and pleaſant that can ſay
With every Period of the ſetting Sun,
I've *lived*, and run my Race like *him* to Day.
To Morrow let the angry Heavens frown,
Or ſmile with Influence more kind,
On *Chance* depends what's yet *behind*,
But ſure what I have ſeiz'd *already*'s all my *own*.

V.

Fortune who no Diverſion knows
Like *Diſappointment*, laughs to ſee
How *Variouſly* ſhe can her Gifts *Tranſpoſe*,
Sometimes to one, ſometimes t'another free.
Be ſure to *enjoy* her while ſhe's pleas'd to *ſtay*.
But if for *Flight* ſhe does prepare,
Don't you at parting drop a Tear,
But hold your *Virtue* faſt, for that alone you *may*.

To HIMSELF.

I.

NOt yet Convinc'd ? why wilt thou ſtill purſue
Through Nature's Field *deluſive* Bliſs ?
'Tis falſe, or elſe too *fugitive* if *true*;
Thou may'ſt aſſoon thy *Shadow* overtake as *this*.
The gaudy Light ſtill dances in thy Eye,
Thou hot and eager in the *Chaſe*
Art drawn through many a thorny rugged Place,
Still laughing and ſighing, but can'ſt ne'er come *nigh*.

II.

Give o'er my Soul, give o'er, nor ſtrive again
This treacherous *Chymic Gold* to find.
Tell me, why ſhould'ſt thou *fancy* there remain
Days yet to *come* more ſweet, than thoſe thou'ſt leſt *be-*
A *wiſer Chymiſt* far than thou, t' obtain (*hind*,
This Jewel all his Treaſures ſpent,
But yet he fail'd in's *grand Experiment*,
And all he gain'd was this, to *know* that *all* was *vain*.

III.

Forbear, and at *another*'s Coſt be Wiſe,
Nor longer this *Coy* Miſtreſs *woo*.
He's mad that runs where none can win the Prize,
Why ſhould'ſt thou loſe thy *Miſtreſs*, and thy *Labour* too ?
Heaven does but ſport with our *Simplicity*
By laying Jewels in our way,
For when we ſtoop to ſeize the *glittering* Prey,
They'r ſnatch't away again, and *baulk* our greedy Eye.

IV.

'Tis ſo, the Choiceſt good this world can give
Will never *ſtand* Fruition's *Teſt*.
This all by Experience *find*, yet few *believe*,
And in the Midſt of *Cheats* hope they ſhall once be *bleſt*.
Strange *Magic* this. So Witches tho they find
No Comfort from their *airy* Meat,
Forget at next Cabal their *ſlender* Treat,
And greedily again fall to their *Feaſt* of *Wind*.

V. But

V.

But thou my Soul thy *ſtrong Conviction* ſhew,
And never *reach* at *Bliſs* again.
Our *beſt* Good here is Nature's *Bounds* to *know*,
And thoſe Attempts to *ſpare*, which elſe would be in *vain*.
Here then Contain thy ſelf, nor higher Good
In this *inchanted* Place purſue.
And pity thoſe *ſhort-ſighted* Souls that do;
This World is beſt *enjoy'd*, when 'tis beſt *underſtood*.

The REFUSAL.

I.

THink not to Court me from my *dear Retreat*;
No, I proteſt 'tis all in vain.
My Stars did never mean I ſhould be *great*,
And I the very Thought *diſdain*.
Or if they did, their Will i'll *diſobey*,
And in my *little Orb* remain as *Fix'd* as *they*.

II.

Honour, that *Idol* which the *Moſt* adore,
Receives no *Homage* from my Knee.
Content in Privacy, I value more
Than all *uneaſie* Dignity.
How ſhould that *Empty* thing deſerve *my* Care,
Which *Virtue* does not *need*, and *Vice* can never *bear*?

III.

Shall I change *ſolid* and *unenvy'd* Joys
Of a *Serene*, tho *humble* State,
For *ſplendid* Trouble, Pomp and ſenſeleſs Noiſe?
This I *deſpiſe* as well as *hate*.
Poor Gain of that Condition, which will be
Envy'd by *others*, and as much *diſlik'd* by *me*.

Hymn

Hymn to DARKNESS.

I.

HAil thou moſt *ſacred Venerable* thing!
What Muſe is worthy thee to ſing?
Thee, from whoſe pregnant *univerſal* womb
All things, even *Light* thy *Rival* firſt did come.
What dares he not attempt that ſings of thee
Thou *Firſt* and greateſt *Myſtery*?
Who can the *Secrets* of thy Eſſence tell?
Thou like the *Light* of God art *inacceſſible*.

II.

Before *Great Love* this *Monument* did raiſe,
This ample *Theatre* of *Praiſe*.
Before the *folding Circles* of the Sky
Were *turn'd* by him who is all *Harmony*.
Before the Morning Stars their *Hymn* began,
Before the *Councel* held for *Man*.
Before the *Birth* of either *Time* or *Place*,
Thou reign'ſt *unqueſtion'd* Monarch in the *empty* Space.

III.

Thy *native* Lot thou didſt to *Light reſign*,
But ſtill *half* of the Globe is *thine*.
Here with a *quiet*, but yet *aweful* Hand,
Like the *beſt* Emperours thou doſt Command.
To thee the Stars *above* their *Brightneſs* owe,
And Mortals their *Repoſe below*.
To thy Protection *Fear* and *Sorrow* flee,
And thoſe that *weary* are of *Light*, find *Reſt* in *thee*.

IV.

Tho *Light* and *Glory* be th' Almighty's *Throne*,
Darkneſs is his *Pavilion*.
From that his radiant *Beauty*, but from thee
He has his *Terror* and his *Majeſty*.
Thus when he firſt proclaim'd his ſacred Law,
And would his *Rebel* Subjects *awe*.
Like Princes on ſome great *Solemnity*,
H'appear'd in's *Robes* of *State*, and Clad himſelf with *thee*.

V. The

V.

The Blest above do thy sweet *Umbrage* prize,
When *Cloy'd* with Light, they *veil* their Eyes.
The *Vision* of the Deity is made
More Sweet and *Beatifick* by thy *Shade*.
But we poor *Tenants* of this Orb below
Don't here thy Excellencies know,
Till Death our Understandings does *improve*,
And then our *Wiser Ghosts* thy silent *Night-Walks* love.

VI.

But thee I *now* admire, thee would I chuse
For my *Religion*, or my *Muse*.
'Tis hard to tell whether thy reverend Shade
Has more good *Votaries* or *Poets* made.
From thy *dark Caves* were *Inspirations* given,
And from thick *Groves* went *Vows* to Heaven.
Hail then thou *Muse's* and *Devotion's* Spring,
'Tis *just* we should *adore*, 'tis *just* we should thee *sing*.

The INVITATION.

Come my Beloved let us go forth into the Field, let us lodge in the Villages, Cantic. 7. 11.

I.

COme thou *divinest* Object of my Love,
This *Noisy* Region don't with us agree;
Come let us hence remove,
I cannot here enjoy *my self* or *thee*.
Here *Vice* and *Folly* keep their *Court*,
Hither their *chiefest Favourites* resort,
Debauchery has here her *Royal Chair*,
This is her great *Metropolis*,
What e'er we see or hear *Contagion* is;
Their *Manners* are *polluted* like the *Air*.
From both unwholsom Vapours rise
And *blacken* with *ungrateful* Steams the neighbouring Skies.

II. Come

II.

Come we'll e'n to our *Country Seat* repair,
The *Native Home* of *Innocence* and *Love:*
There we'll draw *purer* Air,
And pity *Monarchs* ſitting in our Grove.
Here Virtue has her ſafe Retreat,
Abandon'd by the *Many* and the *Great.*
Content does here her *peaceful* Scepter ſway;
Here *Faithfulneſs* and *Friendſhip* dwell,
And *Modeſty* has here her *humble* Cell:
Come my Beloved, Come, and let's away.
Be thou My *Angel* good and kind.
And I'll ne'r *look* at *Sodom* which we leave *behind.*

III.

In Fields and flow'ry Meadows, Woods and Groves
The *firſt* and *beſt* Delights of humane Kind,
There we'll enjoy our Loves
All *free*, and only to our ſelves *confin'd.*
Here ſhall my Eyes be fixt on thee,
Till every *Paſſion* be an *Extaſie.*
Each *Hour* to thee ſhall be *Canonical*;
The Sweets of *Nature* ſhall not *ſtay*,
My Soul, but only ſhew to thee the way;
To thee; Thou *Beauty*'s great *Original.*
Come My Beloved, let's go prove
Theſe ſweet Advantages of Peace, Content, and Love.

Sitting in an ARBOUR.

THus ye good Powers, thus let me ever be
Serene, retir'd, from *Love* and *Buſineſs* free;
The reſt of your great World I here reſign
To the *Contentions* of the *great*;
I only ask that this *Retreat*,
This little *Tenement* be *mine.*
All *my* Ambition's to this *Point* confin'd;
Others inlarge their *Fortunes*, *I* my *Mind.*

II. How

II.

How calm, how happy, how ſerene am I!
How *ſatisfy'd* with my *own* Company!
To few things *forreign* my Content I owe;
But in my ſelf *have* almoſt all
Which I *dare* good or pleaſing call,
Or (what's as well) I *fancy* ſo.
Thus I come near my great Creator's State,
Whoſe *whole* Bliſs in *himſelf* does *terminate*.

III.

Pleas'd with a various *Scene* of Thought I lie,
Whil'ſt an *Obliging* Stream ſlides gently by
Silent and *Deep* as is the Bliſs I chuſe,
All round the little *winged* Quire
Pathetic, *tender* Thoughts inſpire,
And with their Strains provoke my Muſe.
With Eaſe the *Inſpiration* I *obey*
And Sing as *unconcern'd*, and as well *pleas'd* as they.

IV.

If ought below deſerve the Name of Bliſs,
It muſt (whate'er the great ones think) be this.
So once the travelling Patriarch doubly bleſt
With Dreams divine from Heaven ſent,
And his own Heaven of Content,
On's rocky Pillow took his Reſt.
Angels ſtood ſmiling by and ſaid, were we our Bliſs
To change, *it ſhould be* for a State like his.

V.

'Tis ſtrange ſo *cheap*, and yet ſo *great* a Good
Should by ſo very *Few* be *underſtood*.
That Bliſs which Others ſeek with Toil and Sweat
For which they prodigally waſt
Their Treaſures, and yet miſs at laſt,
Here I have at an *eaſie* Rate.
So thoſe that *Coſtly Phyſick* uſe in vain,
Sometimes by ſome Receipt their Health obtain.

The COMPLAINT.

I.

WEll 'tis a dull perpetual *Round*
Which here we silly Mortals *tread*;
Here's naught I'll swear *worth living* to be found,
I wonder how 'tis with the *Dead*.
Better I hope, or else ye Powers divine
Unmake me, I my Immortality *resign*.

II.

Still to be *Vex'd* by Joys *delay'd*
Or by *Fruition* to be *Cloy'd*?
Still to be *wearied* in a *fruitless* Chase,
Yet still to *run*, and *lose* the Race?
Still our *departed* Pleasures to *lament*
Which yet when *present*, gave us no *Content*?

III.

Is this the the thing we so *extol*,
For which we would *prolong* our *Breath*?
Do we for this long Life a *Blessing* Call
And *tremble* at the Name of *Death*?
Sots that we are to think by *that* we *gain*
Which is as well *retain'd* as *lost* with *Pain*.

IV.

Is it for this that we *adore*
Physicians, and their Art implore?
Do we bless *Nature*'s liberal Supply
Of *Helps* against *Mortality*?
Sure 'tis but Vain the *Tree* of *Life* to boast
When *Paradise*, wherein it *grew*, is *lost*.

V.

Ye Powers, why did you Man create
With such *insatiable* Desire?
If you'd *endow* him with no more *Estate*
You should have made him *less aspire*.
But now our Appetites you *Vex* and *Cheat*
With *real* Hunger, and *Phantastic* Meat.

A PASTORAL *upon the Bleſſed Virgin, gone from* Nazareth *to Viſit* Elizabeth. *Wherein the Sadneſs of the Country* Nazareth *is deſcribed during the Abſence of the Virgin.*

Tranſlated out of *Rapin.*

The Speakers are Aſor, Alphæus *and* Zebede.

Aſor. AND why *Alphæus*, in this ſweet Shade doſt thou
Make *Songs*, which are not ſeaſonable *now*,
Since we of fair *Parthenia* are bereft!
Parthenia has our Fields and Mountains left.
Alph. Ay ſomething 'twas my Pipe was t'other Day
So *ſtrangely* out of Tune, and in ſo hoarſe a Key.
Zeb. And I too this Misfortune might have known
By ſome *late* Signs, had my Thoughts been my own.
My little Goats as I to Paſture led
When the Graſs *riſes* from its *dewy Bed.*
I wonder'd why the *new born* Flowers hung down
Their languid Heads, as if ſcorch'd by the Sun.
The *Lilly* and the *Roſe* to droop were ſeen,
And ſo did the immortal *Evergreen*,
Parthenia (alas) was gone ——
For thee ſweet Maid *Lilly* and *Roſe* did grieve,
The *Evergreen* thy Abſence did perceive.
Aſor. There grows a ſhady Elm in our yon Grove
Where *Philomel* wou'd conſtantly repair,
Sweet *Philomel* of all the *Joy* and *Love*
And with melodious Accents fill the Air.
When *Parthenis* was here, this ſhady Tree
Was never, never from her Muſic free.
But now divine *Parthenia* is gone,
Silent and ſad ſhe wanders up and down,
And among Thorns and lonely Hedges makes her Moan.

Alph. Whil'ſt thou fair Nymph didſt bleſs us with thy
Each Grove was ſprightly, every Wood was gay. (Stay,
The Boughs with Birds, the Caves with Swains did ring,
And the ſhril Graſhopper about the Field did ſing.
But now each Wood is ſilent as the Grave,
Nor does the Shepherd whiſtle in his Cave,
Nor does the Bird ſit chirping on the Bough,
Nor is the Graſhopper to be heard *now*.

Zeb. The Fields with living Springs were fruitful made,
And every Spring had his refreſhing Shade.
Sweet Flowers to the Bees were ne'er deny'd,
The Fold with Graſs was conſtantly ſupplied.
Now *Parthenis* is gone, the induſtrious Bee
Can't Flowers procure with all his Induſtry:
The Folds want Graſs, the Fields their living Springs,
Nor have the Fountains *now* their *ſhady* Coverings.
Divine *Parthenia!* with thee we've loſt
All the Delights our Rural Life could boaſt.

Aſor. My little Goats were boldly wont to go
And climbe the deſert Hills, my Sheep would do ſo too.
Then happy Sheep, the Wolf the Fold did ſpare,
The Heat the infant Trees, the Rain the ripen'd Ear.

Alph. Thou now perhaps ſweet Nymph art trave'ling
Some Craggy Hills, unknown to thee before, (o'er
Whileſt we ſit here among the ſhady Trees,
And *ſwallow down* each Cool refreſhing Breeſe.

Zeb. Say you ſweet Weſtern Blaſts that *gently* blow
And you fair Rivers that as *ſwiftly* flow,
You who ſo often have been vocal made
By Swains that *pipe* and *ſing* under the Shade;
Say, now while *Phœbus* holds the middle Sky
Under what Rock does ſweet *Parthenia* ly?
Or through what Coaſts may I her wandrings trace?
Or in what Fountain ſees ſhe now her lovely Face?
Ah! Tho our way of Life be plain and courſe
Yet don't thou like thy Country e'er the worſe
Since 't'as thy happy *Parent* been and *Nurſe*.

Asor. Ah! where's that ſweet Retreat can thee detain,
If thou thy native Country doth diſdain?
Here are pure Springs, and o'er the Springs are Bowers,
Fine Woods and Fruit-Trees, and a *world* of Flowers.

Alph. But why, fair Nymph, would'ſt thou be abſent
When the ſweet Strawberry raiſes up his Head, (now,
Like Morning Sun all delicately red,
And Odorous Bloſſoms ſpring from every Bough?

Zeb. Don't you my Sheep *that* yonder Bank come near
'Tis to *Parthenia* ſacred all that's there,
Nor wou'd the Graſs be touch'd by any but by Her.

Asor. Before fierce *Boreas* blow with's boiſterous Mouth,
Or rainy weather come on from the South,
Beſure *Parthenia* to return again
Leſt by the Cold thou ſuffer or the Rain.

Alph. In a choice Garden is reſerv'd for thee,
Sweet *Marjoram*, and a large Myrtle Tree;
Myrtles thou always lov'ſt, come then if now
Thou ſtill lov'ſt Flowers as thou wert wont to do.

Zeb. Ripe Apples now hang dangling on the Tree
Ready to drop, and only ſtay for thee.
The Fig of thy Delay too does complain,
The tender Fig, but let them both remain
'Till thou to thy dear *Nazareth* return again.

Asor. Return ſweet Nymph, and with thee thou ſhalt
All the Delights and Beauties of the Spring. (bring
Freſh Graſs again ſhall on the Mountains grow,
The Rivers ſhall with Milk and Nectar flow.
The Woods ſhall put on their green Livery,
And Nature in her *Pomp* ſhall wait on thee.
The Country Swains ſhall Flowers and Preſents bring,
And I a Violet Garland for my Offering.
With me ſhall *Azarias* come along
Who with a ſmooth-wrought Pipe ſhall play the Song;
The Song that *Iſrael*'s Shepherd as he ſtood
By *Jordan*'s Bank, play'd to the *liſtning* Flood.

Alph. But if thou longer ſhould'd our Hopes deceive,
With Ruſhes I'll a Basket for thee weave;

Here thy own *Nazareth* I'll repreſent,
How all things here thy Abſence do lament;
The little Goats thou wandring here ſhalt ſee
Mournful and ſad, and all for want of thee.
The Rivers which before flow'd ſwift and clear
As glad the Image of thy Face to bear,
Shall move benum'd and ſlow, whileſt on each hand
Appears the *thirſty* and *forſaken* Sand.
The Corn ſhall droop and languiſh in the Field,
The Meadows no freſh Graſs or Herb ſhall yield,
The Fir-Tree which with ſtately Pride before,
Her curious ſhady Locks towards Heaven ſpread,
Shall now with down-caſt Boughs, and penſive Head,
Thy Abſence mourn, and thy Return implore.
Thou round about ſhalt all things weeping ſee,
If Tears in *Ruſh-Work* may decipher'd be.

Zeb. Preſerve ye Powers, if you don't us diſdain,
The Nymph, whileſt ſhe runs panting o'er the Plain.
And while ſhe's abſent ſince ſhe once had Love
For theſe our Fields, take care ye Powers above
That neither Rivers do their Banks o'erflow
Nor Storms the Paſtures ſpoil, or ripen'd Corn o'erthrow.

Aſor. From Night-Fires let our Stalls (ſweet Nymph) (be free)
Defend from Heat the Roſe, from Cold the Myrtle-tree,
While Roſe and Myrtle are belov'd by thee.
That if you chance to caſt a longing Eye
Back on theſe Fields, now naked and forlorn,
We may have ſtill ſome Flowers left to ſupply
Garlands t' expreſs our Joy, and Dreſſes you t' adorn.

Alph. Haſte not, if through rough ways thy Journy lye,
Haſte not, the Heat will prove an Injury.
Let not the Sun thy *brighter* Beauties ſpoil:
Ah! why wilt thou undo thy ſelf with too much Toil?
Take pleaſing Shelter in ſome gentle Shade
'Till the Day ſlacken, and the Heat b' allay'd.

Zeb. Parthenia, why doſt thou our Hopes prolong?
Perhaps too ſome ill Pipe, and worſer Song;

Now

Now grate thy Ears, whil'ſt thy poor country Swain
On the deaf Winds beſtows ſweet lays in vain.
Hang there my Pipe till ſhe return, and be
A ſilent Monument of my Miſery.
For what are Songs or Mirth without her Company?

Azor. Our hills ſhall mourn while diſtant coaſts you bleſs
Anamis ſhall not dance nor *Sabaris*.
The fields, the naked fields no Songs ſhall know,
And Brooks their diſcontent by murmuring Streams ſhall ſhew.
Thus did the Swains the abſent Nymph lament,
The neighbouring Woods to Heav'n the doleful Accents ſent.

The Tenth Ode of the Second Book of Horace, *Tranſlated.*

I.

'Tis much the better way, believe me 'tis,
Not far to venture on the great *Abyſs*,
Nor yet from Storms thy Veſſel to ſecure,
To touch too nigh upon the dangerous Shore.

II.

The *Golden Mean*, as ſhe's too nice to dwell
Among the ruins of a filthy Cell,
So is her Modeſty withall as great
To baulk the envy of a Princely Seat.

III.

Th' ambitious Winds with greater ſpite Combine
To ſhock the grandeur of the ſtately Pine.
The height of Structures makes the ruin large,
And Clouds againſt high Hills their hotteſt bolts diſcharge.

IV.

An even well-pois'd Mind, an evil State
With Hope, a good with Fear does moderate.
The Summers Pride, by Winter is brought down,
And Flowers again the Conquering ſeaſon Crown.

V.

Take Heart, nor of the Laws of Fate complain,
Tho now 'tis Cloudy, 'twill Clear up again.
The Bow *Apollo* does not always uſe
But with his milder Lyre ſometimes awakes the Muſe.

VI.

Be Life and Spirit, when Fortune proves unkind,
And ſummon up the Vigour of thy Mind.
But when thou'rt driven by too officious Gales,
Be wiſe, and gather in the ſwelling Sails.

The DISCOURAGEMENT.

I.

WHat wou'd the Wiſe Men's Cenſure be,
I wonder, ſhould they hear me ſay
I was reſolv'd to throw my Books away;
How wou'd ſome ſcorn, and others pitty me!
Sure he's in Love, 'tis for ſome Charming *Eve*
That he like *Adam Paradiſe* does *leave*.
This only difference would be
Between my great *Grandſire*, and me,
That I my *Paradiſe* forego
For want of Appetite to know.

II.

'Tis not that Knowledge I deſpiſe;
No, you miſconſtrue my Deſign;
Or that t' *Enthuſiaſm* I incline
And hope by *Inſpiration* to be Wiſe.
'Tis not for this I bid my Books adieu,
No, I love Learning full as well as you,
And have the Arts great Circle run
With as much Vigour as the Sun
His *Zodiac* treads, till t'other Day
A thought ſurpris'd me in my way.

III. Thought

III.

Thought I, for any thing I know,
What we have ſtamp'd for *Science* here,
Does only the Appearance of it wear
And will not paſs above, tho Current here below;
Perhaps they've other Rules to Reaſon by,
And what's Truth here, with them's Abſurdity.
We Truth by a Refracted ray
View, like the Sun at Ebb of Day:
Whom the groſs, treacherous *Atmoſphere*
Makes where it is not, to appear.

IV.

Why then ſhall I with Sweat and Pain
Digg Mines of diſputable Oar?
My labour's certain, ſo is not my Store,
I may hereafter unlearn all again.
Why then for Truth do I my Spirits waſte,
When after all I may be gull'd at laſt?
So when the honeſt *Patriarch* thought
With Seven Years Labour he had bought
His *Rachels*, Love, by Morning Light
He found the Errour of the Night.

V.

Or grant ſome Knowledge dwells below,
'Tis but for ſome few Years to ſtay
Till I'm ſet looſe from this dark Houſe of Clay,
And in an Inſtant I ſhall all things know.
Then ſhall I learn t' *Accumulate Degrees*
And be at once made *Maſter* of all *Sciences*.
What need I then great Summs lay out,
And that Eſtate with care foreſtall,
Which when few Years are come about,
Into my Hands of Courſe will fall?

The 63 Chapter of Iſaiah *Paraphraſed to the 6 Verſe.*

A Pindarique Ode.

I.

STrange *Scene of Glory!* am I well awake?
Or is't my Fancy's wild miſtake?
It cannot be a Dream, bright *Beams of Light*
Flow from the *Viſion's Face*, and pierce my tender Sight.
No common *Viſion* this, I ſee
Some *Marks* of more than *Human Majeſty*.
Who is this mighty *Hero*, who,
With *Glories* round his *Head*, and *Terrour* in his *Brow?*
From *Bozrah* lo he comes, a Scarlet Die
O'reſpreads his Cloaths, and does out-vy
The Bluſhes of the Morning Sky.
Triumphant and Victorious he appears,
And Honour in his looks and habit wears:
How ſtrong he treads, how ſtately does he go!
Pompous and Solemn is his pace,
And full of *Majeſty*, as is his *Face*.
Who is this mighty *Hero*, who?
'Tis I who to my Promiſe faithful ſtand,
I who the Powers of *Death*, *Hell*, and the *Grave*,
Have foil'd with this all-conquering Hand,
I who moſt ready am, and mighty too to ſave.

II.

Why wear'ſt thou then this Scarlet Die?
Say mighty *Hero*, why?
Why do thy Garments look all Red
Like them that in the *Wine-fat* tread?
The *Wine-preſs* I alone have trod,
That vaſt unweildy Frame, which long did ſtand
Unmov'd, and which no mortal Force cou'd e're com-
That ponderous Maſs I ply'd alone (mand,
And with me to aſſiſt were none;
A mighty task it was, worthy the Son of God.

Angels

Angels ſtood trembling at the dreadful ſight,
Concern'd with what Succeſs I ſhould go through
The Work I undertook to do;
Inrag'd I put forth all my might
And down the Engine preſs'd, the violent Force
Diſturb'd the *Univerſe*, put *Nature* out of Courſe.
The Blood guſh'd out in Streams, and checquer'd o're
My Garments with its deepeſt Gore;
With *Ornamental* Drops bedeck'd I ſtood,
And writ my *Victory* with my *Enemy*'s *Blood*.

III.

The day, the *Signal* day is come
When of my Enemies I muſt Vengeance take;
The day when *Death* ſhall have its doom,
And the *Dark Kingdom* with its *Powers* ſhall ſhake.
Fate in her *Kalender* mark'd out this day with *Red*,
She folded down the Iron Leaf, and thus ſhe ſaid,
This day, if ought I can Divine be true,
Shall for a ſignal Victory
Be Celebrated to Poſterity:
Then ſhall the *Prince of Light* deſcend
And reſcue Mortals from th' Infernal Fiend,
Break through his ſtrongeſt Forts, and all his *Hoſt* ſub-
This ſaid, ſhe ſhut the *Adamantin* Volume Cloſe (due.
And wiſh'd ſhe might the *Crouding* Years *tranſpoſe*;
So much ſhe long'd to have the *Scene diſplay*,
And ſee the vaſt *event* of this *important* Day.
And now in midſt of the *revolving* Years, IV
This *great*, this *mighty* one appears:
The faithful *Traveller* the Sun
Has *number'd* out the Days, and the ſet Period run.
I lookt, and to aſſiſt was none,
My *Angelick Guards* ſtood trembling by,
But durſt not venture nigh:
In vain too from my *Father* did I look
For help, my *Father* me forſook.
Amaz'd I was to ſee
How all deſerted me.

I took my fury for my ſole ſupport
And with my ſingle Arm the Conqueſt won,
Loud *Acclamations* fill'd all Heavens Court,
The *Hymning* guards above
Strain'd to an higher pitch of *Joy* and *Love*,
The great *Jehovah* prais'd, and his Victorious Son.

The ELEVATION.

I.

TAke wing (my Soul) and upwards bend thy flight
To thy *Originary* Fields of Light.
Here's nothing, nothing here below
That can deſerve thy longer ſtay;
A ſecret *whiſper* bids thee go
To purer Air, and Beams of *native* Day.
Th' *ambition* of the towring *Lark* out-vy,
And like him *Sing* as thou doſt *upward fly*.

II.

How all things leſſen which my Soul before
Did with the groveling Multitude adore!
Thoſe *Pageant* Glories diſappear,
Which charm and dazle mortals Eyes:
How do I in this higher Sphere,
How do I Mortals, with their Joys deſpiſe!
Pure, uncorrupted Element I breath,
And pity their groſs *Atmoſphere* beneath.

III.

How vile, how ſordid here thoſe Trifles ſhew
That pleaſe the Tenants of that Ball below!
But ha! I've loſt the little ſight,
The Scene's remov'd, and all I ſee
Is one confus'd dark maſs of Night.
What nothing was, now nothing ſeems to be:
How calm this Region, how Serene, how Clear!
Sure I ſome ſtrains of Heavenly Muſick hear.

IV. On,

IV.

On, on, the Task is eaſie now and Light,
No ſteams of Earth can here retard thy flight.
Thou needſt not now thy ſtrokes renew,
'Tis but to ſpread thy Pinions wide,
And thou with eaſe thy Seat wilt view,
Drawn by the Bent of the Ethereal tide.
'Tis ſo I find; How ſweetly on I move,
Not let by things below, and help'd by thoſe above!

V.

But ſee, to what new Region am I come?
I know it well, it is my native Home.
Here led I once a Life Divine,
Which did all good, nor evil know:
Ah! who wou'd ſuch ſweet Bliſs reſign
For thoſe vain ſhews which Fools admire below?
'Tis true, but don't of Folly paſt complain,
But joy to ſee theſe bleſt abodes again.

VI.

A good retrieve: But lo, while thus I ſpeak,
With piercing Rays th' eternal Day does break.
The Beauties of the Face Divine
Strike ſtrongly on my feeble Sight:
With what bright Glories does it ſhine!
'Tis one immenſe and everflowing Light.
Stop here my Soul; thou canſt not bear more Bliſs,
Nor can thy now rais'd Palate ever reliſh leſs.

Annotations.

THe general Deſign of the precedent Poem is to repreſent the gradual Aſcent of the Soul by *Contemplation* to the Supreme Good, together with its firm Adherency to it, and its full Acquieſcence in it. All which is done Figuratively, under the Allegory of a Local Elevation from the Feculent Regions of this lower World.

Pure

Pure uncorrupted Element I breath
And pitty their groſs Atmoſphere beneath.

By *pure uncorrupted Element* is meant the refined intellectual Entertainments of the *Divine Life*, which are abſtracted from all Corporeal Allays. Ἡδοναὶ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου as the Divine *Plato* calls them, *thoſe Pleaſures which are proper to Man as ſuch.* By *groſs Atmoſphere* is meant the more droſſy Gratifications of the *Animal Life*, which comes as ſhort in Purity of the *Divine*, as the thick *Atmoſphere* does of the *pure Æther.*

No ſteams of Earth can here retard thy flight, &c.

The thing intended in the whole Stanza is to inſinuate the great Facility and Pleaſure of the *Divine Life*, to one that is arrived to an Habit of it. For as the Magnetick influence of the Earth can have no Force upon him that is placed in the upper Regions, beyond the Sphere of its Activity, ſo (which is the Counterpart of the Allegory) the inclinations of the Animal Nature have little or no Power over him, who has advanc'd to the Heights of habitual Contemplation. He looks down upon, and obſerves the Tumults of his Senſitive Appetite, but no way Sympathizes with it; He views the Troubled Sea, but with the Unconcernedneſs of a Stander by, not as one that Sails in it. His Soul tho in Conjunction with his Body is yet above the reach of its Guſts and Reliſhes, and from her Serene Station at once ſees and ſmiles at its little Complacencies. As *Lucan* ſays of the Soul of *Pompey*, when advanced to the Ethereal Regions.

——*Illic*

——Illic poſtquam ſe lumine vero
Implevit, ſtellaſque vagas miratur, & aſtra
Fixa polis, vidit quanta ſub nocte jaceret
Noſtra dies, riſitque ſui ludibria trunci.

And here I cannot chuſe but take notice of a Difficulty which is very incident to the buſineſs in Hand, and wherewith I my ſelf was once very much perplex'd when I firſt applied my Thoughts to Moral Contemplations. 'Tis in ſhort this, we have a receiv'd Axiom that the Difficulty of the Performance Commends the Merit of a good Action. Now if ſo, it ſeems to follow that he who by a long habitual Courſe of Piety and Virtue has made his Duty eaſie and natural to himſelf, will be leſs perfect than another who does hardly abſtain from Vice, or than himſelf before the Acquiſition of that Habit. And then that Ἐγκράτεια which *Ariſtotle* in the 7th of his Ethics makes only a *Semi-virtue*, becauſe of the Difficulty of its Performance, will for that very Reaſon become *Virtus Heroica*, and if ſo, to make a Progreſs in Virtue will involve a Contradiction. This I confeſs appear'd to me in no inconſiderable Intricacy, when it firſt occur'd to my Thoughts, and I could not preſently unwind my ſelf from it.

But in anſwer to it I conſider, 1*ſt*. That when the Difficulty of the Performance is ſaid to commend the Action, 'tis not ſo to be underſtood as if Difficulty did in it ſelf as an Ingredient, add any Moment to the Excellency of a Man's Virtue, but only that 'tis a ſign of it *à Poſteriori*. Becauſe were not a Man endow'd with ſuch a Degree of Virtue, he would not be able to conquer the ſuppos'd Difficulty.

culty. So that if a Man has a ſtock of Reſolution ſufficient to conquer ſuch a Difficulty, his Virtue is the ſame, tho he never be ingaged in it. For all the Virtue is abſolv'd in the Degree of Reſolution, the Difficulty is only a Sign or Indication of it. And upon this Conſideration 'tis that thoſe whom Nature has befriended with ſuch an Εὐφυΐα or happy Conſtitution as carries with it little or no Temptation to Vice may yet be accounted Virtuous, becauſe their Reſolution to Virtue may be ſo firm and peremptory, that they would adhere to it notwithſtanding any Oppoſition.

2*ly*. I conſider that we are to diſtinguiſh of a twofold Difficulty, 1*ſt*. There is a Difficulty which ariſes from the Nature of the Work it ſelf. And 2*ly*. There is a Difficulty which ariſes from the Diſpoſition of the Agent. Now 'tis not this later Difficulty that commends the excellency of Virtue, but only the former, which is no way diminiſh'd by the Habit. For after the Induction of the Habit, the Work remains the ſame in its own Nature, which it was before; the only Change is in the Agent, who by his Habit is render'd more expedite and ready for the Performance of what is good. But as for the later Difficulty which proceeds from the Agent himſelf, that is ſo far from commending the Worth of any good Action, that it derogates much from its Commendation. 'Tis eaſineſs of Performance that here gives the Value. He that abſtains from ſenſual Pleaſures with great Abhorrency, and has ſet himſelf at a wide Diſtance from it, diſcovers more and has more of a Virtuous Reſolution, than he whoſe Mind ſtands almoſt in an Equipoiſe, and does but

juſt

juſt abſtain. For ſince we become Virtuous by a right Application of our Wills, the excellency of our Virtues muſt be meaſured by the greater or leſs Strength of our Reſolutions. And conſequently, he who by a ſtrong Habit has made his Virtue moſt natural and eaſie to him is arrived to the greateſt Perfection.

Drawn by the bent of the Æthereal Tide;

This is in Alluſion to the *Carteſian* Hypotheſis of Vortices or Whirl-pools of ſubtile Matter. The Myſtic Senſe is this, that the higher a Seraphic Soul advances in the Contemplation of the Supreme Good, the ſtronger he will find its Attractions.

I know it well, it is my Native home.

This Verſe with the whole Stanza proceeds upon the *Platonic* Hypotheſis of Præ-exiſtence. I ſhall not here diſpute the Problem. Thoſe that deſire to be Satisfied concerning it, I refer to the Works of that Oracle of profound Wiſdom and Learning, the Excellent Dr. *More*, to an ingenious Treatiſe call'd *Lux Orientalis*, and to the Account of *Origen*. In the mean while I hope the moſt rigid maintainer of *Orthodoxy* will allow me the Liberty of alluding to it as an *Hypotheſis*, if not, I'm ſure the Laws of *Poetry* will. My Buſineſs here was to imitate Nature, and to repreſent how a Soul would be affected in ſuch a Caſe, ſuppoſing it true: Which I think I have not done amiſs. For ſo the Ingenious Platoniſt *Boethius*,

Huc te ſi reducem referat via,
Quam nunc requiris immemor,
Hæc dices, memini, patria eſt mihi,
Hinc ortus hic ſiſtam gradum.

'Tis one immenſe and everflowing Light.

My Buſineſs was here to give a Compendious deſcription of God. Now among all the Repreſentations we have of him, I thought none ſo agreeable to the Genius of Poetry as a ſenſible One, and of all thoſe I could not find a better in all the Inventory of the Creation, than this of Light. I ſhall not here endeavour a Parallel; It may ſuffice to ſay, that the Repreſentation is warranted by Authority, both Humane and Divine. The School of *Plato* deſcribes the Nature of God by an immenſe Light, or Lucid Fountain overflowing and diffuſing its refreſhing Beams. And Holy Scripture goes further, and ſays in expreſs Terms, that *God is light, and in him is no darkneſs at all*, John 1. 5.

The CURIOSITY.

I.

UNhappy State of Mortals here below,
Whom unkind Heaven does inſpire
With ſuch a *conſtant, ſtrong deſire,*
And with ſuch *ſplendor Faculties* to *know!*
And yet we not Content to bear the Pain
Of thirſt *unquencht* and *fruitleſs* Love,
With one more *Curſe* our ills improve,
And *Toil* and *Drudge* for what we ne're can gain.

II.

With what ſtrange Frenzy are we all poſſeſt,
Contented Ignorance to refuſe,
And by *Laborious* ſearch to loſe,
Not the *Enjoyment* only, but our Reſt!
Something like *Oar* does on the ſurface *ſhine,*

We

We taken with the ſpecious Shew,
With Pains dig in the *flattering* Mine
But all alas in *vain*, *Truth* lies more *low*.

III.

The greateſt Knowledge we can ever gain
From ſtudying Nature, Books or Men,
Serves juſt t' employ dull Hours; but then
It *yields* leſs *Pleaſure* than it *coſts* us *Pain*.
Beſides, ſo *ſhort* and *treacherous* is our Age,
No ſooner are we *counted* Wiſe,
But *envious* Death ſhuts up our Eyes,
Juſt as our *Part* is *learnt*, we quit the *Stage*.

IV.

Could I among the nobler Spirits find
One that would lay aſide his *State*,
And be my kind *Confederate*,
That *ſuddainly* I might inrich my Mind;
'Twould be ſome Pleaſure this, if happy I
Could once at Eaſe ſit a *ſurvey*
And my *great* Victory *enjoy*,
And (not as now) ſtill *labour on* and *dye*.

The 114 *Pſalm Paraphraſed.*

I.

WHen conquer'd by the Plagues of *Moſes* Rod
Th' Egyptian Tyrant gave Command
That *Iſrael* ſhould depart his Land,
Iſrael the choſen *Family* of God.
Among them dwelt the *Holy One*,
Juda his *Sanctuary*, and *Iſrael* was his *Throne*.

II.

The Sea beheld this *Scene*, and did admire,
Each Wave ſtood *ſilently* to ſee
The Power of the Divinity;
They ſaw, and fled the dreadful *Guide* of *Fire*.
And *Jordan* too divided ſtood, (Flood.
The *Prieſts* the ſacred *Ark* bore through the *yielding*

III.

Mount *Sinai* with great Horrour ſtruck and Dread,
Forgot her Weight, and in a Trance
Like a light Ram, did skip and dance;
She fear'd, and fain would hide her *Palſy* Head.
The Hills their *Mother* Mountain ſaw,
The little Hills, and like young Sheep they ſtood in Awe.

IV.

What made thee to retreat, thou mighty Sea?
Tell me, for never any *Shore*
Knew ſuch a wondrous *Tide* before,
And thou great *Jordan*; ſay, what ailed thee?
Say *ſacred* Mount, what meant thy Trance,
And you ſmall *under-hills*, why did you skip and dance?

V.

You need not think it *Shame* to *own* your *Fear*;
What you diſmaid, the ſame would make
The univerſal Fabrick ſhake;
The Cauſe was great, for *Jacob*'s God was there.
That God who did the *Rock* ſubdue,
And made it *melt* in *Tears*, tho *harder* far than *you*.

The 148 *Pſalm Paraphraſed.*

I.

O Come let all created Force conſpire
A general *Hymn* of Praiſe to ſing;
Join all ye Creatures in one ſolemn Quire,
And let your *Theme* be Heaven's Almighty King.

II.

Begin ye bleſt Attendants of his Seat,
Begin your high *Seraphic* Lays,
'Tis juſt you ſhould, your Happineſs is great,
And all you are to give again, is *Praiſe*.

III.

Ye glorious Lamps that rule both Night and Day,
Bring you your *Allelujahs* too;

To

To him that Tribute of Devotion pay
Which once blind *Superſtition* gave to you.

IV.

Thou *firſt* and *faireſt* of material Kind
By whom his other Works we ſee,
Subtile and active as pure Thought and Mind,
Praiſe him that's *Elder*, and more *Fair* than thee.

V.

Ye Regions of the Air his Praiſes ſing,
And all ye *Virgin* Waters there
Do you *Advantage* to the Conſort bring,
And down to us the *Allelujah* bear.

VI.

In chaunting forth the great Jehovah's Praiſe
Let theſe the upper Conſort fill,
He ſpake, and did you all from nothing raiſe;
As you did then, ſo now obey his Will.

VII.

His Will, that fix'd you in a conſtant State
And cut a *Track* for Nature's *Wheel*,
Here let it run ſaid he, and made it Fate,
And where's that Power which can this Law repeal?

VIII.

Ye Powers that to th' inferiour World retain,
Join you now with the Quire above.
And firſt ye Dragons try an higher Strain,
And turn your *angry* Hiſſings into *Praiſe* and *Love*.

IX.

Let Fire, Hail, Snow and Vapours that aſcend
Unlock'd by *Phœbus* ſearching Rays,
Let ſtormy Winds ambitiouſly contend,
And all their wonted Force imploy in Praiſe.

X.

Ye ſacred Tops which ſeem to brave the Skies,
Riſe *higher*, and when Men on you
Religious Rites perform and Sacrifice,
With their *Oblations* ſend your *Praiſes* too.

XI.

Ye Trees whoſe Fruits both Men and Beaſts conſume
Be you in Praiſes *fruitful* too;
Ye Cedars, why have you ſuch choice *Perfume*
But that ſweet *Incenſe* ſhould be made of you?

XII.

Ye Beaſts with all the humble creeping Train
Praiſe him that made your Lot ſo high;
Ye Birds who in a nobler Province reign
Send up your Praiſes higher than you fly.

XIII

Ye ſacred Heads, that wear *Imperial* Gold
Praiſe him that you with Power arrays,
And you whoſe Hand the Scale of *Juſtice* hold
Be *Juſt* in this, and pay your *Debt* of Praiſe.

XIV.

Let ſprightly Youth give *Vigour* to the Quire,
Each Sex with another vye;
Let feeble Age *diſſolv'd* in Praiſe *expire*,
And Infants too in *Hymns* their *tender* Voices *try*.

XV.

Praiſe him ye Saints who Piety profeſs
And at his Altar ſpend your Days;
Ye Seed of *Iſrael* your great Patron bleſs,
'Tis *Manna* this, for Angels Food is *Praiſe*.

A PASTORAL *On the Death of his Sacred Majeſty King* CHARLES the Second.

Menalcas, *Thyrſis*, and *Daphnis*.

Thyr. WHat, ſad? *Menalcas:* Sure this pleaſant Shade
Was ne'er for ſuch a mournful Tenant made.
All things ſmile round thee, and throughout the Grove
Nature diſplays a Scene of Joy and Love.
But Shepherd where's thy Flock?—

Sure

Sure they in ſome forbidden Paſtures ſtray
Whilſt here in Sighs thou numbreſt out the Day.
Men. Ah *Thyrſis*, thou could'ſt witneſs heretofore
What ſtrange Affection to my Flock I bore.
Thou know'ſt my *Thyrſis*, the *Arcadian* Plain
Could not afford a more induſtrious Swain.
But I no longer now that Mind retain.
Thyr. What change ſo great but what Love's Power can make?
Menalcas does his Kids, and tender Lambs forſake.
So I, when Slave to *Galatea*'s Eyes,
Did neither City nor the Country prize,
But all their Sports, and my Flock too deſpiſe.
Hang thou my Pipe (ſaid I) on yonder Tree,
For then (alas) I had no Taſt for Melody.
Obſcurely in thick Woods I ſate alone
And ſigh'd in Conſort to the Turtles Moan.
Men. 'Tis not fond Love that cauſes my Diſtreſs,
No *Thyrſis*, you'r miſtaken in your Gueſs.
The glorious Prize I have in Triumph born,
I am no longer now *Alexis* Scorn.
Or if I were, I now could be unmoved
At every ſcornful Glance, nor care where e'er he loved.
A nearer Grief preys on my Spirits now,
And I beneath a heavier Burthen bow.
The gentle God of the *Arcadian* Plains
Pan that regards the Sheep, *Pan* that regards the Swains,
Great *Pan* is dead ——
Throughout the Fields the doleful Tidings ran,
A Swoon ſeiz'd all the Shepherds at the Death of *Pan*.
Of *Pan* —— But ſee the reſt that Tree will ſhew
Which wears the ſad Inſcription of my Woe,
Where, with the Bark my Sorrows too will grow.
Thyr. How Shepherd, is it by Fame's Trumpet ſaid
Than *Pan* the beſt of all the Gods is dead?
Whom oft w' adored, and whom becauſe we knew
As *good* as they, we thought him as *immortal* too?
'Tis ſtrange; but Omens now I find are true.

In yonder Copſe a ſhady Oak there ſtood,
Stately, well rooted, and it ſelf a Wood;
Her Branches o'er the inferiour Trees were ſpread,
Who all ador'd her as their ſoveraign Head:
Hither, when heated by the Guide of Day
While their young wanton Goats did skip and play,
Hither the Swains would conſtantly repair,
Here ſing, and in the ample Shade drink freſher Air.
This Tree when I my Goats to Paſture drove,
While all was *clear above*, and *ſtill*, throughout the *Grove*.
Struck by ſome ſecret Force fall down I ſaw, (and Awe.
The Wood-Nymphs all were ſeiz'd with Wonder, Grief,
Nor had I left this Ruin far behind
When lo (ſtrange Sight) a Nightingal I find,
Which from brisk Airs, enlivening all the Grove
Coo'd on a ſuddain like a mournful Dove.
Amaz'd I ſtand, and on my Pipe eſſay
With ſome brisk Song her Sorrows to allay.
But all in vain. She from the lofty Tree (like thee.
Kept on her ſad Complaint, and mourn'd, and droop'd
Men. And why theſe ſlighter things doſt thou relate?
Nature her ſelf perceiv'd *Pan*'s mighty Fate.
She fainted, when he drew his lateſt Breath,
And almoſt ſympathiz'd with him to Death.
Each Field put on a languid dying Face (Graſs.
The Sheep not minding Food, with Tears bedew'd the
The Lions too in Tears their Grief confeſt,
And ſavage Bears, *Pan*'s Enemies profeſt.
The Nymphs all wept, and all the noble Train
Of Deitys that frequent the Court of *Pan*.
Ecchо that long by nought but Voice was known,
In Sounds repeated others Woes, but wept her own.
Th' *Arcadians* mourn'd, and preſs'd beneath the weighty
With Cruelty they charg'd the Gods and every Star. (Care
Thyr. And well they might; Heaven could not ſhew a
More mild, more good t' his Votaries than he. (Deity
He was all Love, all Peace, all Clemency;

H'al-

H' allur'd the Love, and melted down the Hate
Of all: He had no Enemy but Fate.
Pan kept the Fields, from Wolves ſecur'd the Stall,
He guarded both the humble Shrubs, and Cedars tall.
The Summers Heat obey'd *Pan*'s gentle Hand,
And Winter Winds blew ſoft at his Command, (Land.
He bleſt the Swains with Sheep, and fruitful made their
Weep Shepherds, and in Pomp your Grief expreſs,
The Ground with Flowers, your ſelves with Cypreſs dreſs.

Let the *Arcadians* in a ſolemn Train
March ſlowly on, let mournful Accents fill the Plain,
Do this at leaſt in Memory of *Pan*.

Daph. But why this vain Expence of Tears and Breath?
D' ye think *Pan* loſt and ſwallow'd up in Death?
He lives, and with a pleas'd and wondering Eye
Contemplates the new Beauties of the Sky.
Whence on theſe Fields he caſts propitious Rays,
Now greater than our Sorrow, greater than our Praiſe.
I ſaw (for why mayn't I rehearſe the Sight)
Juſt as the Stars were kindled by the Queen of Night
Another new-made milky Way appear,
I ſaw, and wonder'd what Event it might prepare.
When lo great *Pan* amaz'd my trembling Sight,
As through th' Æthereal Plains he took his Flight
Deck'd round with Rays, and darting Streams of Light.
Triumphant was his March, a ſacred Throng
Of Gods incloſed him, *Pan* was all their Song,
The Sky ſtill brighten'd as they went along.

Men. Thy Viſion be all Truth——
But who ſhall now the royal Sheep-crook hold,
Who patronize the Fields, who now ſecure the Fold?

Daph. Diſcharge that Care, the royal Stock does yield
Another *Pan* to patronize the Field.
An Heir of equal Conduct does the Scepter ſway,
One who long nurtured in the Paſtoral Way,
In Peace will govern the *Arcadian* Plains, (Swains.
Defend the tender Flocks, and chear the drooping

Thyr.

Thyr. Come then, let's tune the Pipe t'a brisker Key,
Let's with a Dance our Sorrows chaſe away,
And to new *Pan* in Sports devote the Day.

SATIETY.

I.

HAſte on dull *Time*, thy winged Minutes haſte,
I care not now how ſoon thou bring'ſt my laſt.
By what I've liv'd I plainly know
The *total* Sum of all below.
The Days to come, altho they promiſe more,
I know will be as falſe as thoſe that went before.

II.

The *beſt* of Life tho *once* enjoy'd, is vain,
And why ye Powers the ſelf-ſame o'er again?
The *Comedy*'s ſo dull, I fear
'Twill not a *ſecond* acting bear.
No, I've enough; I cannot like the Sun
Each Day the ſelf-ſame Stage, and ſtill *unwearied*, run.

III.

What cruel Laws are theſe that me confine
Thus ſtill to dig in a deceitful Mine?
Be juſt ye Powers, my Soul ſet free,
Give her her *native* Liberty.
'Tis 'gainſt the *Stage's* Law to force my Stay,
I've ſeen an *Act* or two, and do not like the *Play*.

The REPLY.

I.

SInce you deſire of me to know
Who's the *Wiſe* Man, I'll tell you who.
Not he whoſe rich and fertile Mind
Is by the *Culture* of the *Arts* refin'd;

Who

Who has the *Chaos* of diſorder'd Thought
By Reaſon's *Light* to *Form* and Method brought.
Who with a clear and piercing Sight
Can ſee through *Niceties* as dark as *Night*.
You err, if you think this is He,
Tho ſeated on the Top of the *Porphyrian* Tree.

II.

Nor is it He to whom kind Heaven
A ſecret *Cabala* has given
T' unriddle the *myſterious* Text
Of *Nature*, with dark *Comments more* perplext.
Or to *decypher* her *clean writ* and *fair*
But moſt *confounding* puzling *Character*.
That can through all her Windings trace
This ſlippery Wanderer, and *unveil* her Face.
Her *inmoſt Mechaniſm* view,
Anatomize each Part, and ſee her *through* and *through*.

III.

Nor he that does *the* Science know,
Our *only Certainty* below,
That can from *Problems* dark and nice
Deduce *Truths* worthy of a *Sacrifice*.
Nor he that can *confeſs* the Stars, and ſee
What's writ in the black Leaves of *Deſtiny*.
That knows their Laws, and how the Sun
His *daily* and his *annual* Stage does run.
As if he did to them diſpence
Their Motions, and there ſate *ſupream Intelligence*.

IV.

Nor is it he (although he boaſt
Of Wiſdom, and *ſeem* wiſe to *moſt*)
Yet 'tis not he, whoſe buſie Pate
Can dive into the deep Intrigues of State.
That can the great *Leviathan* controul,
Manage and rule't, as if he were its *Soul*.
The *wiſeſt* King thus gifted was
And yet did not in theſe *true Wiſdom* place.
Who then is by the *Wiſe Man* meant?
He that can want *all this*, and yet can be *content*.

My ESTATE.

I.

HOw do I pity that proud wealthy Clown
That does with Scorn on my low State look down!
Thy vain Contempt dull *Earth-worm* ceaſe,
I won't for Refuge fly to this,
That none of Fortune's Bleſſings can
Add any *Value* to the *Man*,
This *all* the *wiſe* acknowledge to be *true*;
But know I am as *rich*, *more* rich than *you*.

II.

While you a *Spot* of *Earth* poſſeſs with Care
Below the Notice of the *Geographer*,
I by the *Freedom* of my Soul
Poſſeſs, nay more, *enjoy* the *whole*;
To th' *Univerſe* a Claim I lay;
Your *Writings* ſhew perhaps you'll ſay,
That's *your* dull Way, my Title runs more *high*,
'Tis by the *Charter* of Philoſophy.

III.

From that a *firmer* Title I derive
Than all your *Courts* of *Law* could ever give.
A *Title* that more *firm* doth ſtand
Than does even *your* very *Land*,
And yet ſo generous and free
That none will e'er *bethink* it me,
Since my Poſſeſſions tend to no Man's *Loſs*,
I all enjoy, yet nothing I ingroſs.

IV.

Throughout the Works divine I caſt my Eye,
Admire their *Beauty*, and their *Harmony*.
I view the glorious Hoſt above,
And him that made them, Praiſe and Love.
The flowry Meads and Fields beneath,
Delight me with their odorous Breath.
Thus is my Joy by you not underſtood
Like that of *God*, when he ſaid *all was good*.

V. Nay

V.

Nay (what you'd think leſs likely to be true)
I can enjoy what's *yours* much more than *you*.
Your Meadow's *Beauty* I ſurvey,
Which you prize only for its *Hay*.
There can I ſit beneath a Tree,
And write an *Ode* or *Elegy*.
What to *you care*, does to *me pleaſure* bring,
You *own* the *Cage*, I in it *ſit* and *ſing*.

The CONQUEST.

I.

IN Power or Wiſdom to contend with thee
Great God, who but a *Lucifer* would dare?
Our Strength is but Infirmity,
And when we this perceive our Sight's moſt clear:
But yet I will not be excell'd thought I,
In *Love*, in *Love*, I'll with my Maker vy.

II.

I view'd the Glories of thy Seat above,
And thought of every Grace and Charm divine,
And further to encreaſe *my* Love
I meaſured all the Heights and Depths of *thine*.
Thus there broke forth a Strong and Vigorous Flame,
And almoſt melted down my mortal Frame.

III.

But when thy Bloody Sweat and Death I view
I own (Dear Lord) the Conqueſt of thy Love,
Thou doſt my higheſt Flights outdo,
I in a lower Orb, and ſlower move.
Thus in this Strife's a double Weakneſs ſhewn,
Thy Love I cannot *equal*, nor yet *bear* my *own*.

The IMPATIENT.

I.

WHat *envious* Laws are thoſe of Fate,
Which fix a Gulph (Bleſt Souls) 'twixt us and you!
How 'twou'd refreſh and chear our Mortal State,
When our dejected Looks confeſs
The Emptineſs of *earthly* Bliſs,
Could we in this *black Night* your brighter Glories view!

II.

Vain Comfort when I thus complain
To hear the Wiſe and Solemn gravely ſay,
Your Grief and Curioſity reſtrain,
Death will e'er long this Bar remove,
And bring you to the Bleſt above,
Till then with this *great Proſpect* all your Longings ſtay.

III.

But ah the Joy peculiar here
Does from the greater *Excellence* ariſe,
'Twill be worth nothing in an *equal* Sphere.
Let me your noble Converſe have
Bleſt Spirits, on this ſide the Grave,
I ſhall hereafter be as great as you, as wiſe.

IV.

Beſides, when plung'd in Bliſs *divine*
I ſhall not taſte, nor need this *leſſer* Joy.
What Comfort then does from this Proſpect ſhine?
'Tis juſt as if in Depth of Night,
You rob a Traveller of his Light;
And promiſe to reſtor't when 'tis clear *Day*.

CONTENT.

I.

I Bleſs my Stars I envy none,
Not great, nor wealthy, no nor yet the *Wiſe*,
I've learn't the Art to like my own,
And what I can't attain to, not to prize.
Vaſt Tracts of Learning I deſcry
Beyond the Sphere perhaps of my Activity,
And yet I'm ne'er the more concern'd at this,
Than for the Gems that lye in the profound *Abyſs*.

II.

Should I my proper Lot diſdain
As long as further good eclipſes mine,
I may t' Eternity complain,
And in the Manſions of the Bleſt repine.
There ſhall I Numbers vaſt eſpy
Of Forms more excellent, more wiſe, more bleſt than I.
I ſhall not *then* lament my unequal Fate,
And why ſhould larger Proſpects *now* moleſt my State?

III.

Where all in equal Stations move
What Place for *Harmony* can there be found?
The lower Spheres with thoſe above
Agree, and dance as free and briskly round.
Degrees of *Eſſences* conſpire
As well as various *Notes* t' accompliſh Heaven's Quire.
Thus would I hav't *below*, nor will I care
So the Reſult be *Harmony*, what *Part I* bear.

Againſt

Againſt KNOWLEGE.

I.

WEll let it be the Cenſure of the Wiſe,
That *Wiſdom* none but *Fools* deſpiſe:
I like not what they gravely preach
And muſt another Doctrin teach.
Since all's ſo falſe and vain below,
There's nought ſo *indiſcreet* as this, to *know*.

II.

The thoughtleſs, dull and leſs diſcerning Mind
No *Flaws* in earthly Joys can find,
He Cloſes with what Courts his Sight,
All Coin will paſs by his dim Light.
Though often baulk't, he hopes for Reſt,
Sleeps on and Dreams, and is in Error Bleſt.

III.

But he that has refin'd and high-rais'd Senſe,
Can nothing taſte but *Excellence*.
Nor can he Nature's Faults ſupply,
By Fancy's happy Imag'ry.
He ſees that all Fruition's vain,
Can't taſte the preſent, nor yet truſt again.

VI.

Our Joys, like Tricks, do all on Cheats depend,
And when once known, are at an end.
Happy and *Wiſe*, two Bleſſings are
Which meet not in this mortal Sphere;
Let me be Ignorant below,
And when I've ſolid Good, then let me know.

Seeing

Seeing a great Perſon lying in State.

I.

WEll now I needs muſt own
That I hate Greatneſs more and more;
'Tis now a *juſt Abhorrence* grown
What was Antipathy *before:*
With other Ills I could diſpence,
And *acquieſce* in *Providence.*
But let not Heaven my *patience* try
With this *one Plague*, leſt I *repine* and *dye.*

II.

I knew indeed before,
That 'twas the great man's wretched fate,
While with the *living* to *endure*
The vain *impertinence* of *State*;
But ſure thought I, in *death* he'll be
From that and other troubles free:
What e're his *life*, he then will lye
As free, as undiſturb'd, as calm as I.

III.

But 'twas a groſs miſtake;
Honour, that too *officious* ill,
Won't even his breathleſs Corps forſake,
But *haunts* and waits about him *ſtill.*
Strange *perſecution*, when the grave
Can't the diſtreſſed *Martyr* ſave!
What *Remedy* can *there* avail,
Where *Death* the great *Catholicon* does fail?

IV.

Thanks to my Stars that I
Am with ſo low a fortune bleſt,
That what e're *Bleſſings* fate *deny*,
I'm ſure of *privacy* and *reſt.*
'Tis well; thus long I am content,
And *reſt* as in my *Element.*

Then Fate, if you'l appear my friend,
Force me not 'gainſt my *nature* to *aſcend.*

V.

No, I would ſtill be *low*,
Or elſe I would be very *high*,
Beyond the ſtate which *Mortals* know,
A kind of *Semi-deity.*
So of the Regions of the air
The *High'ſt* and *Loweſt* quiet are,
But 'tis this middle *Height* I fear,
For *Storms* and *Thunder* are ingendred there.

Seccond Chapter of the Cant. *from verſe* 10, *to* 13.

I.

'TWas my Beloved ſpake,
I know his charming Voice, I heard him ſay,
Riſe up my Love, my faireſt one awake,
Awake and come away.

II.

The Winter all is paſt
And ſtormy Winds that with ſuch rudeneſs blew,
The Heavens are no longer *overcaſt*,
But try to look like *you.*

III.

The Flowers their Sweets diſplay,
The Birds in ſhort *præludiums* tune their throat,
The Turtle in low murmurs does eſſay
Her melancholy Note.

IV.

The fruitful Vineyards make
An odorous ſmell, the Fig looks freſh and gay,
Ariſe my Love, my faireſt one awake,
Awake and come away.

To a Friend in Honour.

I.

SOme thoughtleſs heads perhaps admire to ſee
That I ſo little to your *titles* bow;
But wonder not my Friend, I ſwear to me
You were as great *before* as *now*.
Honour to *you* does nothing *give*,
Tho' from your worth much luſtre ſhe receive.

II.

Your *native* Glory does ſo far out-do
That of the *Sphere* wherein you move,
That I can nothing but *your* ſelf in *you*
Obſerve, admire, eſteem or love.
You are a *Diamond* ſet in Gold,
The Curious, the *Rich ſtone*, not *this* behold.

III.

All that to your late Honour you can owe
Is only that you're brought in view;
You don't begin to have, but *Men* to know,
Your *Votaries* are *increas'd*, not you.
So the Sun's height adds not t' his light,
But only does *expoſe* him more to *ſight*.

IV.

To ſome whoſe native worth more *dimly* ſhin'd
Honour might ſome *improvement* give,
As *Metals* which the Sun has *leſs* refin'd
A *value* from their *Stamp* receive.
But *you* like *gold*, paſs for no more
Tho *Stamp'd*, than for your *weight* you wou'd before.

A Divine Hymn on the Creation.

I.

AWake my Lyre, and thy *ſweet* forces joyn
With me to ſing an Hymn divine,
Let both our Strains in pleaſing numbers flow,
But ſee, thy ſtrings with tediouſneſs and pain
Ariſe into a tuneful ſtrain,
How canſt thou ſilent lye?
The Univerſe is *Harmony*,
Awake, and move by *ſympathy*,
My *heart*'s already *tuned*, O why art *thou* ſo *ſlow!*

II.

Jehovah is our Theme, th' eternal *King*,
Whoſe Praiſe *admiring* Angels ſing,
They ſee with ſteddy and attentive eyes
His *naked* Beauties, and from *Viſion* raiſe
To *wondrous* heights their *Love* and *Praiſe*.
We Mortals only view
His *Back-parts*, and that *darkly* too,
We muſt fall *ſhort*, what ſhall we do,
But neither too can *they* up to his grandeur *riſe*.

III.

No power can juſtly praiſe him but muſt be
As great, as infinite as he,
He comprehends his *boundleſs* ſelf alone,
Created minds too ſhallow are and dim
His *works* to fathom, much more *him*.
Our Praiſe at height will be
Short by a *whole infinity*,
Of his all glorious Deity,
He cannot have the *full*, and ſtands in *need* of *none*.

IV.

He can't be *leſs*, nor can he more *receive*,
But ſtands on fix'd *Superlative*.
He's in himſelf *compendiouſly* bleſt;
We, acted by the *Weights* of ſtrong deſire,

To

To good *without* our *ſelves* aſpire,
We're always moving hence
Like lines from the *Circumference*,
To ſome more *in-lodg'd* excellence.
But he is one unmov'd *ſelf-center'd* Point of *Reſt*.

V.

Why then, if *full* of Bliſs that ne're could *cloy*,
Would he do ought but ſtill *enjoy*?
Why not *indulge* his *ſelf-ſufficing* ſtate,
Live to himſelf at large, calm and ſecure,
A *wiſe eternal Epicure*?
Why ſix days work, to frame
A Monument of Praiſe and Fame
To him whoſe Bliſs is ſtill the ſame?
What need the *wealthy-Coin*, or he that's *Bleſt Create*?

VI.

Almighty *Love* the faireſt Gem that ſhone
All-round, and *half* made up his *Throne*,
His *Favourite* and *darling* excellence,
Whom oft he would his *Royal* Virtue ſtile,
And view with a *peculiar* Smile,
Love moved him to create
Beings that might participate
Of their Creator's happy ſtate,
And that *good* which he could not *highten*, to *diſpence*.

VII.

How large thy Empire, *Love*, how great thy Sway!
Omnipotence does thee obey.
What *complicated* Wonders in thee ſhine!
He that t' *infinity* it ſelf is great
Has one way to be *greater* yet;
Love will the method ſhew,
'Tis to *impart*; what is't that thou
O Sovereign Paſſion can'ſt not do?
Thou mak'ſt *Divinity* it ſelf much *more divine*.

VIII.

With *pregnant* love *full-fraught*, the great *Three-one*,
Would now no longer be *alone*.

Love, gentle Love *unlocke* his *fruitful* Breaſt
And 'woke th' *Ideas* which there dormant lay.
Awak'd their Beauties they diſplay:
Th' Almighty ſmil'd to ſee
The comely Form and Harmony
Of his eternal *Imag'ry*;
He ſaw 'twas *good* and *fair*, and th' Infant Platform *bleſt*.

IX.

Ye Seeds of Being, in whoſe fair Boſoms dwell
The Forms of all things poſſible;
Ariſe, and your Prolific force diſplay;
Let a fair Iſſue in your *Moulds* be *caſt*
To fill in part this empty waſte.
He ſpake. The empty ſpace
Immediately in *Travel* was
And ſoon brought forth a *formleſs* maſs,
Firſt matter came *undreſs'd*, ſhe made ſuch *haſte* t' obey.

X.

But ſoon a Plaſtick Spirit did ferment
The liquid dusky element.
The Maſs *harmoniouſly* begins to move,
Let there be Light, ſaid God, 'twas ſaid and done,
The Maſs *dipt through* with brightneſs ſhone.
Nature was pleas'd to ſee
This *feature* of Divinity,
Th' Almighty ſmil'd as well as ſhe,
He own'd his *likeneſs* there, and did his *Firſt-born* love.

XI.

But lo, I ſee a goodly frame ariſe
Vaſt folding Orbs, and azure Skies,
With lucid *whirl-pools* the vaſt Arch does ſhine,
The Sun by day ſhews to each World his light,
The Stars ſtand *ſentinel* by night.
In midſt of all is ſpread
That pondrous bulk whereon we tread,
But where is its Foundation laid?
'Tis pompous all and great, and worthy hands divine.

XII.

XII.

Thy Temple's built great God, but where is he
That muſt admire both it and thee?
Ope one Scene more, my Muſe, bleſs and adore,
See there in ſolemn Councel and Debate
The great divine *Triumvirate*.
The reſt one Word obey'd,
'Twas done almoſt *before* 'twas ſaid;
But Man was not ſo *cheaply* made,
To *make* the world was *great*, but 't *epitomiſe* it *more*.

XIII.

Th' accompliſh'd work ſtands his ſevere review
Whoſe Judgment's moſt exactly true.
In Nature's *Book* were no *Errata*'s found,
All things are *good*, ſaid God, they anſwer well
Th' *Ideas* which within me dwell;
Th' Angelick voices, joyn
Their *Praiſe* to the *Applauſe* divine,
The Morning Stars in Hymns combine,
And as they ſung and play'd, the *jocant* Orbs danc't round.

XIV.

With this thy Quire divine, great God I bring
My *Euchariſtick* Offering.
I cannot here ſing more exalted layes,
But what's defective now I will ſupply
When I enjoy thy Deity.
Then may'ſt thou ſleep my Lyre,
I ſhall not then thy help require,
Diviner thoughts will then me fire
Than thou, tho play'd on by an Angels hand, canſt raiſe.

Plato's two *Cupids*.

I.

THe heart of Man's a *living* Butt,
At which two different *Arches* ſhoot,
Their ſhafts are *pointed* both with *fire*,
Both wound our hearts with *hot deſire*.

II.

In this they differ, he that lyes
A Sacrifice t' his Miſtreſs eyes,
In pain does *live*, in pain *expire*,
And *melts* and *drops* before the fire.

III.

But he that flames with Love divine,
Does not in th' heat *conſume*, but *ſhine*.
H' *enjoys* the fire that round him lies,
Serenely *lives*, ſerenely *dyes*.

IV.

So *Devils* and *damned* Souls in Hell
Fry in the fire with which they dwell;
But Angels ſuffer not the ſame,
Altho their *Vehicles* be *flame*.

V.

The Heart whoſe fire's divine and chaſt
Is like the *Buſh* that did not *waſte*.
Moſes beheld the Flame with fear,
That *waſted* not, for *God* was *there*.

A Wiſh.

I.

WHatever Bleſſing you my *Life* deny,
Grant me kind Heaven this one thing when I *dye*.
I charge thee guardian Spirit hear,
And as thou lov'ſt me, *further* this my Prayer.

II.

When I'm to leave this groſſer Sphere, and try
Death, that amazing Curioſity,
When juſt about to breath my laſt,
Then when no *Mortal* joy can ſtrike my taſte,

III.

Let me ſoft melting ſtrains of Muſick hear,
Whoſe Dying ſounds may ſpeak Death to my ear;
Gently the Bands of life unty,
Till in ſweet Raptures I diſſolve and dye.

IV. How

How ſoft and eaſie my new Birth will be
Help'd on by Muſick's gentle *Midwifery!*
And I who 'midſt theſe Charms expire,
Shall bring a Soul well *tun'd* to Heaven's Quire.

To Dr. More. *An Ode.*

I.

GO Muſe, go haſten to the Cell of Fame
(Thou know'ſt her reverend aweful ſeat,
It ſtands hard by your bleſt retreat)
Go with a brisk Alarm aſſault her ear,
Bid her her loudeſt Trump prepare;
To ſound a more than Human name,
A name more excellent and great
Than ſhe could ever publiſh yet;
Tell her ſhe need not ſtay till *Fate* ſhall give
A *Licenſe* to his Works, and bid them *live*,
His Worth *now ſhines* through Envy's baſe *Alloy*,
'Twill fill her wideſt Trump, and all her Breath employ.

II.

Learning, which long like an *inchanted* Land,
Did Human Force and Art defie,
And ſtood the *Virtuoſo*'s beſt Artillery,
Which nothing mortal could ſubdue,
Has yielded to this Hero's *Fatal* hand,
By him is conquer'd, held, and peopled too.
Like Seas that border on the Shore
The Muſes *Suburbs* ſome Poſſeſſion knew,
But like the deep Abyſs their *inner* ſtore
Lay unpoſſeſs'd, till ſeiz'd and own'd by you:
Truth's *outer Courts* were trod before,
Sacred was her *receſs*, *that* Fate reſerv'd for *More*.

III.

Others in Learning's *Chorus* bear their *part*
And the great Work diſtinctly ſhare:

Thou our great *Catholick Profeſſor* art,
All Science is annex'd to thy unerring *Chair*.
Some leſſer *Synods* of the Wiſe
The Muſes kept in Univerſities;
But never yet till in thy Soul
Had they a Councel *Oecumenical*.
An Abſtract they'd a mind to ſee
Of all their ſcatter'd gifts, and ſumm'd them up in thee.
Thou haſt the Arts whole Zodiack run
And fathom'ſt all that here is known.
Strange reſtleſs Curioſity,
Adam himſelf came ſhort of thee,
He taſted of the *Fruit*, thou bear'ſt away the *Tree*.

IV.

Whilſt to be great the moſt aſpire,
Or with *low* Souls to raiſe their Fortunes *higher*.
Knowledge the chiefeſt Treaſure of the Bleſt,
Knowledge the *Wiſe* man's *beſt Requeſt*,
Was made thy choice, for this thou haſt declin'd
A life of noiſe, impertinence and State;
And what er'e elſe the Muſes hate;
And mad'ſt it thy own buſineſs to inrich thy mind.
How calm thy life, how eaſie, how ſecure
Thou *Intellectual Epicure*.
Thou as another *Solomon* haſt try'd
All Nature through, and nothing to thy Soul *deny'd*.
Who can two ſuch Examples ſhew?
He all things try'd t' *enjoy*, and you all things to *know*.

V.

By *Babel*'s Curſe, and our Contracted Span
Heaven thought to check the ſwift career of Man.
And ſo it prov'd till now, our age
Is much too ſhort to run ſo long a Stage.
And to learn words is ſuch a vaſt *delay*
That we're *benighted* er'e we come half way.
Thou with unuſual haſt driv'ſt on
And doſt even *Time* it ſelf *out-run*.

No

No hindrance can retard thy Courſe,
Thou rid'ſt the Muſes winged Horſe;
Thy Stage of Learning ends e're that of Life be done.
There's now no work left for thy accompliſh'd mind,
But to ſurvey thy Conqueſts, and inform Mankind.

The Paſſion of the Virgin Mother, Beholding the Crucifixion of her Divine Son.

I.

NIgh to the Fatal, and yet Sovereign Wood,
Which crouds of wondring Angels did ſurround,
Devoutly ſad the Holy Mother ſtood,
And view'd her Son, and ſympathiz'd with every Wound.

II.

Angelick Piety in her mournful Face,
Like Rays of Light, through a watry Cloud did ſhine;
Two mighty Paſſions in her Breaſt took place,
And like her Son, ſh'appear'd half Human, half Divine.

III.

She ſaw a blacker and more tragic Scene
Than e're the Sun before, or then would ſee;
In vain did Nature draw her dusky Screen,
She ſaw, and wept, and felt the dreadful Agony.

IV.

Grief in the Abſtract ſure can riſe no higher
Than that which this deep Tragedy did move;
She ſaw in Tortures and in Shame, expire
Her Son, her God, her Worſhip and her Love.

V.

That Sacred Head, which all Divine and Bright,
Struck with deep Awe the Votaries of the Eaſt,
To which a Star paid Tributary Light,
Which the (*then joyful*) Mother kiſs'd, ador'd and bleſt.

VI.

That head which Angels with pure light had crown'd,
Where Wiſdom's Seat and Oracle was plac'd;
Whoſe Air Divine threw his Traitors to the Ground,
She ſaw with pointed Circles of rude Thorns embrac'd.

VII.

Thoſe hands whoſe Sovereign Touch were wont to Heal
All Wounds and Hurts that others did endure,
Did now the Piercings of rough Iron feel,
Nor could the wounded Heart of his ſad Mother Cure.

VIII.

No, no, it bled to ſee his Body torn
With Nails, and deck'd with gems of purple gore,
On four great Wounds to ſee him rudely born,
Whom oft her Arms a happy burthen found before.

IX.

It bled to hear that Voice of grief and dread
Which the Earth's Pillars and Foundations ſhook;
Which rent the Rocks, and 'woke the ſleeping Dead,
My God, my God, O why, why haſt thou me forſook?

X.

And can the tide of Sorrow riſe more high?
Her melting Face ſtood thick with Tears to view,
Like thoſe of Heaven his ſetting Glories dye,
As Flowers left by the Sun are charg'd with Evening dew.

XI.

But ſee Grief ſpreads her Empire ſtill more wide,
Another Spring of Tears begins to flow,
A barbarous Hand wounds his now ſenſleſs Side;
And Death that ends the Son's, renews the Mother's Woe.

XII.

She ſees now by the rude inhuman Stroke
The Myſtic River flow, and in her Breaſt
Wonders, by what ſtrange Figure th' Angel ſpoke,
When amongſt all the Daughters he pronounc'd her Bleſt.

XIII.

Thus far did Nature, Pity, Grief and Love,
And all the Paſſions their ſtrong Efforts try,

But

But ſtill tho dark *below*, 'twas clear *above*,
She had (as once her Son) her *ſtrengthning* Angel by.

XIV.

Gabriel the chiefeſt of th' Almighty's train
That firſt with happy tidings bleſt her ear,
Th' Archangel, *Gabriel*, was ſent again,
To ſtem the tide of Grief, and qualifie her fear.

XV.

A large *Proſpective* wrought by hands divine
He ſet before her firſt *enlightned* eye,
'Twas hewn out of the Heaven *Chriſtalline*,
One of whoſe ends did *leſſen*, th' other *magnifie*.

XVI.

With that his ſufferings he expos'd to ſight,
With this his Glories he did repreſent,
The weight of this made th' other ſeem but light,
She ſaw the mighty odds, ador'd, and was content.

Damon *and* Pythias. *Or, Friendſhip in Perfection.*

I.

Pyth. 'TIs true (my *Damon*) we as yet have been
Patterns of conſtant love, I know;
We have ſtuck ſo cloſe, no third could come between,
But will it (*Damon*) will it ſtill be ſo?

II.

Da. Keep *your* Love true, I dare engage that mine
Shall like my Soul immortal prove.
In Friendſhip's Orb how brightly ſhall we ſhine
Where all ſhall *envy*, none *divide* our Love!

III.

Pyth. Death will; when once (as 'tis by Fate deſign'd)
T' *Eliſium* you ſhall be remov'd,
Such ſweet Companions there no doubt you'll find,
That you'll forget that *Pythias* e're you lov'd.

IV. *Da.*

IV.

Da. No, baniſh all ſuch fears; I then will be
Your Friend and guardian Angel too.
And tho with more refin'd Society
I'le leave *Elyſium* to converſe with you.

V.

Pyth. But grant that after Fate you ſtill are kind,
You cannot long continue ſo;
When I, like you, become all Thought and Mind,
By what mark then ſhall we each other know?

VI.

Da. With care on your laſt hour I will attend,
And leſt like Souls ſhould me deceive,
I cloſely will embrace my new-born Friend,
And never after my dear *Pythias* leave.

The Indifferency.

I.

WHether 'tis from Stupidity or no,
I know not; but I ne're could find
Why I one Thought or Paſſion ſhould beſtow
On Fame, that gaudy Idol of Mankind.
Call me not Stoick; no, I can purſue
Things excellent with as much Zeal as you:
But here I own my ſelf to be
A very luke-warm Votary.

II.

Should thouſand Excellencies in me meet,
And one bright Conſtellation frame,
'Tis ſtill as Men's phantaſtick Humours hit
Whether I'm Written in the Book of Fame.
So tho' the Sun be ne're ſo fair and bright,
And ſhine with free, uninterrupted Light,
'Tis as the Clouds diſpoſed are,
E're he can paint his Image there.

III.

The World is ſeldom to true Merit juſt,
Through Envy or through Ignorance.
True Worth like Valour, oft lies hid in Duſt,
While ſome falſe Heroes grac'd with a Romance.
The true God's Altar oft neglected lies,
When Idols have Perfumes and Sacrifice.
And tho the true One ſome Adore,
Yet thoſe that do Blaſpheme, are more.

IV.

Yet grant that Merit were of Fame ſecure,
What's Reputation, what is Praiſe?
Who'd one Day's Toil, or ſleepleſs Night endure,
Such a vain *Babel* of Eſteem to raiſe?
Pleas'd with his hidden Worth, the Great and Wiſe
Can, like his God, this foreign Good deſpiſe;
Whoſe Happineſs would ne're be leſs,
Tho none were made to Praiſe or Bleſs.

V.

Even I who dare not rank my ſelf with thoſe
Who pleas'd, into themſelves retire,
Find yet in great Applauſes leſs repoſe,
And do Fame leſs, leſs than my ſelf admire.
Let her loud Trumpet ſound me far and near,
Th' *Antipodes* will never of me hear.
Or were I known throughout this Ball,
I've but a Point, when I have All.

VI.

Then as for Glory which comes after Fate,
All that can then of me be ſaid,
I value leaſt of all, it comes too late,
'Tis like th' embalming of the ſenſleſs dead.
Others with Pleaſure, what me Labour coſt
May read, and praiſe; but to me all is loſt.
Juſt as the Sun no Joy does find
In that his Light, which chears Mankind.

VII.

Or ſhould I after Fate has clos'd my eyes,
Should I my *living* Glories know,
My *wiſer*, *improv'd* Soul will then deſpiſe
All that poor Mortals ſay or think below.
Even they who of mens ignorance before
Complain'd, becauſe few did their works adore,
Will then the ſelf ſame *Cenſure* raiſe,
Not from their *ſilence*, but their *praiſe*.

VIII.

Or grant 'twou'd pleaſure bring to know that I
After my death *live* ſtill in *Fame*;
Thoſe that *admire* me too muſt ſhortly *dye*,
And then where's my *Memorial*, where my *name*?
My Fame, tho *longer-liv'd*, yet once ſhall have
Like me, its *Death*, its *Funeral*, its *Grave*.
This only *difference* will remain,
I ſhall, *that* never riſe again.

IX.

Death and Deſtruction ſhall e're long deface
The World, the *work* of hands *divine*,
What Pillars then, or Monuments of Braſs
Shall from the general Ruin reſcue *mine*?
All then ſhall equal be; I care not then
To be a while the *talk* and *boaſt* of *men*.
This only grant, that I may be
Prais'd by thy *Angels*, Lord, and *thee*.

The Infirmity.

I.

IN other things I ne're admir'd to ſee
Men injured by *extremity*.
But little thought in *Happineſs*
There might be danger of *exceſs*.
At leaſt I thought there was no fear
Of ever meeting with *too* much on't *here*.

II. But

But now theſe melting ſounds ſtrike on my ſenſe
With ſuch a *powerful* excellence;
I find that Happineſs may be
Screw'd up to ſuch *extremity*,
That our too Feeble Faculties
May not be ſaid t'*enjoy*, but *ſuffer* Bliſs.

III.

So frails our Mortal ſtate, we can ſuſtain
A mighty *bliſs* no more than *pain*.
We loſe our weak *precarious* breath
Tortur'd or *tickled* unto death.
As *ſprights* and *Angels* alike fright
With too much *Horror*, or with too much *Light*.

IV.

Alas! I'm *over-pleas'd*, what ſhall I do
The *painful* joy to *undergo?*
Temper your too melodious Song,
Your *doſe* of bliſs is much too *ſtrong*;
Like thoſe that too rich Cordials have,
It don't ſo much *revive*, as make me *rave*.

V.

What *Cruelty* 'twou'd be *ſtill* to confine
A *mortal* Ear to Airs *divine?*
The Curſe of *Cain* you have on me
Inverted by your Harmony,
For ſince with that you charm'd my ear,
My *Bliſs* is much too *great* for me to *bear*.

VI.

Relieve this *Paroxyſm* of delight,
And let it be leſs *exquiſite*.
Let *down* my Soul; 'tis too high *ſet*;
I am not *ripe* for Heaven yet.
Give me a Region more *beneath*,
This *Elgment*'s too *fine* for me to *breath*.

The Arreſt.

I.

WHither ſo faſt fond Paſſion doſt thou rove,
Licentious and unconfin'd?
Sure this is not the proper *Sphere* of *Love*,
Obey; and be not *deaf*, as thou art *blind*.
All is falſe and treacherous here
That I muſt *love* with *Caution*, and *enjoy* with *fear*.

II.

Contract thy Sails, leſt a too *guſty* blaſt
Make thee from ſhoar launch out too far;
Weigh well this Ocean, e're thou make ſuch haſte,
It has a nature very *ſingular*.
Men of the treacherous *ſhoar* complain
In *other* Seas, but *here* moſt Dangers in the *Main*.

III.

Should'ſt thou, my Soul, indulge thy forward Love,
And not controul its headlong courſe,
The Object in th' enjoyment *vain* will prove,
And thou on *Nothing* fall with *all* thy *force*.
So th' eager *Hawk* makes ſure of 's prize,
Strikes with *full* might, but *over-ſhoots* himſelf and *dyes*.

IV.

Or ſhould'ſt thou with long ſearch on ſomething light
That might content and *ſtay* thy mind,
All good's here *wing'd*, and ſtands prepar'd for flight,
'Twill leave thee *reaching out* in vain, behind.
Then when *unconſtant* Fate tho'ſt proved,
Thou'lt ſigh, and ſay with tears, *I wiſh I ne're had loved*.

V.

Well then ye ſofter Powers that Love Command
And wound our Breaſts with *pleaſing* ſmart,

Gage well your *Launce*, and bear a ſteddy hand,
Leſt it run in too deep into my *Heart*.
Or if you're fix'd in your deſign
Deeply to wound my *Heart*, wound it with *Love divine*.

To the Memory of my dear Neece, M. C.

I.

BY tears to eaſe my grief I've try'd,
And Philoſophick med'cins have applied;
From Books and Company I've ſought relief,
I've uſed all *Spells* and *Charms* of Art
To *Lay* this *Troubler* of my heart;
I have, yet I'm ſtill haunted by my grief.
Theſe give ſome *eaſe*, but yet I find
'Tis *Poetry* at laſt muſt *cure* my mind.

II.

Come then, t' aſſwage my pain I'll try
By the ſweet *magick* of thy *Harmony*.
Begin my Muſe, but 'twill be hard I know
For thee my *Genius* to *ſcrew*
To *heights* that to my *Theme* are due,
The *weight* of Grief has *ſet* my Soul ſo *low*.
To grace her death my ſtrains ſhould be
As far above *Mortality* as *ſhe*.

III.

Is ſhe then *dead*, and can it be
That I can *live* to write her *Elegy*?
I hoped, ſince 'twas not to my Soul deny'd
To ſympathize in all the pain
Which ſhe tho *long* did *well* ſuſtain,
T' have carry'd on the *ſympathy*, and *dy'd*.
But *Death* was ſo o'repleas'd I ſee
At this *rich ſpoil*, that ſhe neglected *me*.

IV.

Yet has ſh' of all things made me bare,
But *Life*, nor was it kindneſs here to ſpare.

So when th' Almighty would t' inform mankind
His *Eaſtern Hero*'s patience try
With the *Extreams* of miſery;
He gave *this* Charge to the malicious Fiend;
Of all Life's *Bleſſings* him deprive,
Vex him with *all* thy *Plagues*, but let him *live*.

V.

Yet I *will* live (ſweet Soul) to ſave
Thy *name*, ſince *thee* I cannot from the grave.
I will not of this *burthen* Life complain
Tho *tears* than *verſes* faſter flow,
Tho I am *plung'd* in grief and woe,
And like th' inſpired *Sybills* write in *pain*.
To *dye* for Friends is thought to be
Heroick, but I'll *Life* endure for thee.

VI.

'Tis juſt, ſince I in *thee* did *live*
That thou ſhould'ſt *Life* and *Fame* from *me* receive.
But how ſhall I this Debt of Juſtice pay.?
The *Collours* of my Poetry
Are all too *dead* to *Copy* thee,
'Twill be *Abuſe* the beſt that I can ſay.
Nature that wrought thy curious frame
Will find it hard to draw again the *ſame*.

VII.

In *Council* the Almighty ſate
When he did *man* his *Maſter-piece* create.
His *Agent Nature* did the ſame for thee;
In making thee ſhe wrought for *Fame*,
And with ſlow progreſs drew thy *Frame*,
As he that painted for *Eternity*.
In her *beſt Mould* ſhe did thee *caſt*,
But thou waſt *over-wrought*, and made *too fine* to *laſt*.

VIII.

Thy Soul the *Saint* of this fair *Shrine*
Was pure without *Alloy*, and all divine.
Active and nimble as *Ætherial* light,

Kind

Kind as the Angels are above
Who live on *Harmony* and *Love*;
The Rays thou ſhott'ſt were *warm*, as well as *bright*:
So mild ſo pleaſing was thy fire,
That none could *envy*, and *all muſt admire*.

IX.

Sickneſs to whoſe ſtrong *Seige* reſign
The beſt of Natures did but ſet forth thine.
Wiſely thou did'ſt thy Paſſions all Controul,
And like a Martyr in the fire
Devout and Patient did'ſt expire,
Pains could *expel*, but not *untune* thy Soul.
Thou bore'ſt them all ſo *Moderately*
As if thou meanſt to teach how I ſhould *mourn* for *thee*.

X.

No wonder ſuch a noble mind
Her way again to Heaven ſo *ſoon* could find.
Angels, as 'tis but ſeldom they appear,
So neither do they make long ſtay,
They do but viſit, and away,
'Tis pain for them t' endure our too groſs Sphere.
We could not hope for a *Reprieve*,
She muſt *dye ſoon*, that made ſuch *haſte* to *live*.

XI.

Heaven did thy lovely Preſence want,
And therefore did ſo *early* thee *tranſplant*.
Not 'cauſe he dar'd not *truſt* thee longer here,
No, ſuch ſweet Innocence as thine
To take a *Stain* was too *divine*,
But ſure he *Coveted* to have thee *there*;
For meaner Souls he could delay,
Impatient for thine, he would not *ſtay*.

XII.

The Angels too did covet thee
T' advance their *Love*, their *Bliſs*, their *Harmony*.
They'd lately made an *Anthem* to their *King*,
An *Anthem* which contain'd a part
All ſweet, and full of Heavenly Art,

Which none but thy *Harmonious* Soul could ſing.
'Twas all Heaven's Vote thou ſhould'ſt be gone
To *fill* th' Almighty's *Quire*, and to *adorn* his *Throne*.

XIII.

Others when gone t' eternal reſt
Are ſaid t' augment the *number* of the Bleſt.
Thou doſt their very *Happineſs* improve,
Out of the Croud they ſingle thee,
Fond of thy ſweet Society,
Thou waſt *our* Darling, and art ſo *above*.
Why ſhould we of thy loſs Complain
Which is not only *thine*, but *Heaven*'s gain?

XIV.

There doſt thou ſit in Bliſs and Light,
Whileſt I thy Praiſe in mournful numbers write.
There doſt thou drink at pleaſure's virgin Spring,
And find'ſt no *leiſure* in thy Bliſs
Ought to admire *below*, but this.
How can I *mourn*, when thou doſt *Anthems ſing?*
Thy Pardon my ſweet Saint I implore,
My Soul ne're *diſconform'd* from thine *before*.

XV.

Now will I now: My tears ſhall flow
No more, I will be bleſt 'cauſe thou art ſo.
I'll borrow Comfort from thy happy ſtate,
In *Bliſs* I'll *ſympathize* with thee
As once I did in *miſery*.
And by *Reflection* will be Fortunate.
I'll practice now, what's done above,
And by *thy* happy ſtate my own improve.

The Reſignation.

I.

LOng have I view'd, long have I thought,
And held with *trembling* hand this *bitter Draught*?
'Twas now juſt to my Lips applied,

Na-

Nature *ſhrank* in, and all my Courage *dy'd.*
But now Reſolv'd, and firm I'll be,
Since Lord, 'tis *mingled*, and *reach'd* out by *thee.*

II.

I'll truſt my great *Phyſician*'s skill,
I know what he *preſcribes* can ne're be ill;
To each *Diſeaſe* he knows what's fit,
I own him *wiſe* and *good*, and do ſubmit,
I'll now no longer grieve or pine,
Since 'tis *thy* pleaſure Lord, it ſhall be *mine.*

III.

Thy Med'cine puts me to great ſmart,
Thou'ſt wounded me in my moſt *tender* part;
But 'tis with a deſign to cure,
I muſt and will thy *Sovereign touch* endure.
All that I priz'd below is gone,
But yet I ſtill will pray, *thy will be done.*

IV.

Since 'tis thy Sentence I ſhould part
With the moſt precious treaſure of my heart,
I freely *that* and *more* reſign,
My *heart* it ſelf, as its *Delight*, is thine,
My little *All* I give to thee,
Thou gav'ſt a greater gift, thy *Son*, to me.

V.

He left true Bliſs and Joys above,
Himſelf he *emptied* of all good, but *love:*
For me he freely did forſake
More good, than he *from* me *can* ever *take.*
A *Mortal* Life for a *Divine*
He took, and did at laſt even *that* reſign.

VI.

Take all great God, I will not grieve,
But ſtill will wiſh, that I had ſtill to give.
I hear thy voice, thou bid'ſt me quit
My *Paradiſe*, I bleſs and do ſubmit.
I will not murmur at thy word,
Nor beg thy Angel to ſheath up his Sword.

To my Guardian Angel.

I.

I Own (my gentle guide) that much I owe
For all thy *tutelery* care and love,
Through life's *wild maze* thou'ſt led me hitherto,
Nor ever wilt (I hope) thy *Tent* remove;
But yet t' have been compleatly true,
Thou ſhould'ſt have guarded her life too.
Thou know'ſt my Soul did moſt inhabit there,
I could have *ſpared* thee, t' have guarded *her*.

II.

But ſince by thy neglect, or Heavens Decree,
She's gone t' encreaſe the *pleaſures* of the Bleſt,
Since in *this Sphere* my *Sun* I ne're ſhall ſee,
Grant me (kind Spirit) grant me this Requeſt.
When I ſhall eaſe thy charge and dye,
(For ſure I think thou wilt be by)
Lead me through all the numerous Hoſt above,
And bring my *new-flown* Soul to her I love.

III.

With what high Paſſion ſhall we then embrace!
What Pleaſure will ſhe take t' impart to me
The Rites and Methods of that Sacred place,
And what a Heaven 'twill be to learn from thee!
That *Pleaſure* I ſhall then I fear
As ill as now my *ſorrow* bear;
And could then any Chance my life deſtroy,
I ſhould I fear then *dye again* with *Joy*.

The Defiance.

I.

WEll *Fortune*, now (if e're) you have ſhewn
What *you* had in *your* power to do,
My *wandring* Love at length had fix'd on *one*,

One

One who might pleaſe even *unconſtant you.*
Me of this one you have deprived
On whom *I ſtay'd*, my Soul, in whom *I liv'd*,
You've ſhewn *your* Power and *I* reſign,
But now I'll ſhew thee *Fortune*, what's in *mine.*

II.

I will not, no *I* will not grieve,
My tears within their banks ſhall ſtand;
Do what thou wilt, *I* am reſolved to *Live*,
Since *thee I* can't, *I* will my ſelf command.
I will my Paſſions ſo controul
That neither *they*, nor thou ſhalt hurt my *Soul*;
I'll run ſo *counter* to thy will,
Thy *good* I'll relliſh, but not feel thy *Ill.*

III.

I *felt* the Shaft that *laſt* was ſent,
But now thy *Quiver I* defy.
I fear no *Pain* from thee or *Diſcontent*,
Clad in the *Armour* of *Philoſophy.*
Thy *laſt* ſeiz'd on me out of guard,
Unarm'd too far within thy reach *I dar'd*,
But now the *field* I'll *dearly* ſell,
I'm now (at leaſt by *thee*) *Impaſſable.*

IV.

My Soul now ſoars high and ſublime
Beyond the *Spring* of thy *beſt* bow,
Like thoſe who ſo *long* on high Mountains climb
Till they ſee *rain* and *thunder* here *below.*
In vain thou'lt ſpend thy Darts on me,
My Fort's too ſtrong for thy Artillery,
Thy *cloſeſt aim* won't touch my mind,
Here's all thy gain, ſtill to be thought *more blind.*

Super-

Superſtition.

I.

I Care not tho it be
By the *preciſer* ſort thought *Popery*;
We Poets can a *Licence* ſhew
For every thing we do,
Hear then my little Saint, I'll *Pray* to thee.

II.

If now thy happy mind
Amidſt its various joys can leaſure find
T' attend to any thing ſo low
As what I ſay or do,
Regard, and be what thou waſt ever, *kind.*

III.

Let not the Bleſt above
Engroſs thee quite, but ſometimes hither rove;
Fain would I thy ſweet Image ſee
And ſit, and talk with thee,
Nor is it *Curioſity* but *Love.*

IV.

Ah what delight 'twou'd be
Would'ſt thou ſometimes by ſtealth converſe with me!
How ſhould I thy ſweet Commerce prize
And other joys deſpiſe!
Come then, I ne're was yet *deny'd* by thee.

V.

I would not long detain
Thy Soul from Bliſs, nor keep thee here in pain.
Nor ſhould thy Fellow-Saints e're know
Of thy eſcape below,
Before thou'rt miſs'd, thou ſhould'ſt return again.

VI.

Sure Heaven muſt needs thy love
As well as other qualities improve.
Come then and recreate my ſight
With rays of thy pure light,
'Twill chear my eyes more than the Lamps above.

VII. But

VII.

But if Fate's ſo ſevere
As to confine thee to thy Bliſsful Sphere,
(And by thy Abſence I ſhall know
Whether thy ſtate be ſo)
Live happy, but be mindful of me there.

The Complaint of Adam *turn'd out of* Paradiſe.

I.

AND muſt I go, and muſt I be no more
The Tenant of this happy ground?
Can no *reſerves* of pity me reſtore,
Can no *attonement* for my ſtay *compound?*
All the rich Odours that *here grow* I'd give
To Heaven in Incenſe, might I here but live.
Or if it be a Grace too high
To *live* in *Eden*, let me there but *dye.*

II.

Fair place, thy ſweets I juſt began to know,
And muſt I leave thee now again?
Ah why does Heaven ſuch *ſhort-liv'd* Bliſs beſtow?
A *taſte* of *Pleaſure*, but *full* draught of *Pain.*
I ask not to be *chief* in this Bleſt ſtate,
Let Heaven ſome other for that place create.
So 'tis in *Eden*, let me but have
An *under-gardiner*'s place, 'tis all I crave.

III.

But 'twill not do I ſee, I muſt away,
My feet prophane this Sacred ground;
Stay then bright Miniſter, one Minute ſtay,
Let me in *Eden* take one *farewell* round.
Let me go gather but one fragrant Bough
Which as a *Relique*, I may *keep* and *ſhew*;
Fear not the *Tree* of *Life*; it were
A Curſe to be *Immortal*, and not *here.*

IV. 'Tis

'Tis done; Now farewel thou moſt happy place,
Farewel ye ſtreams that ſoftly creep,
I ne're again in you ſhall view my face,
Farewel ye Bowers, in you *I* ne're ſhall ſleep.
Farewel ye Trees, ye flowery Beds farewell,
You ne're will bleſs my *taſte*, nor you my *ſmell*.
Farewel thou Guardian divine,
To thee my *happy Rival I* reſign.

V.

O whether now, whether ſhall *I* repair
Exil'd from this *Angelic* coaſt?
There's nothing left that's pleaſant, good or fair,
The *World* can't recompence for *Eden* loſt.
'Tis true, I've here a Univerſal ſway,
The Creatures me as their chief Lord obey;
But yet the World tho *all* my Seat,
Can't make me *happy*, tho it make me *great*.

VI.

Had *I* loſt *leſſer* and but *ſeeming* Bliſs,
Reaſon my ſorrows might relieve.
But when the loſs great and ſubſtantial is,
To *think* is but to ſee good cauſe to *grieve*.
'Tis well I'm *mortal*, 'tis well *I* ſhortly muſt
Loſe all the thoughts of *Eden* in the duſt.
Senſeleſs and Thoughtleſs now I'd be,
I'd loſe even my *ſelf*, ſince I've loſt *thee*.

To Sleep.

I.

BReak off thy Slumber gentle God
And hither bring thy *charming* Rod;
The Rod that weeping Eyes does cloſe
And gives to Melancholy hearts repoſe;
With *that* my Temples ſtroke, and let me be
Held by thy *ſoft Captivity*.

But do not *all* my ſenſes bind,
Nor *fetter* up too *cloſe* my mind;
Let *mimic* Fancy wake, and freely rove,
And bring th' *Idea* of the Saint *I* love.

II.

Her lovely *Image* has been brought
So often to my *waking* thought,
That 'tis at length worn out and dead,
And with its fair Original is fled.
Or elſe my working over-thoughtful mind
With much *intention* is made *blind*,
Like thoſe who look on Objects bright
So long till they quite loſe their ſight.
Ah Cruel Fates, it't not enough for you
To take my *Saint*, but *I* muſt loſe her *Image* too?

III.

Thee gentle *Charmer I* implore
This my *loſt Treaſure* to reſtore;
Thy *magic* vertues all apply,
Set up again my *Bank-rupt* memory.
Search every *Cell* and corner of my Brain,
And bring my *Fugitive* again.
To thy dark Cave thy ſelf betake
And 'mong thy *Dreams* enquiry make;
Summon the *beſt Ideas* to appear
And bring that *Form* which moſt reſembles her.

IV.

But if in all thy ſtore there be
None (as *I* fear) ſo fair as ſhe,
Then let thy *Painter Phancy* limn
Her Form *anew*, and ſend it by a Dream.
Thou can'ſt him all her lively Features tell
For ſure *I* think thou knew'ſt her well.
But if *deſcription* wont ſuffice
For him to draw a Piece ſo *nice*,
Then let him to my *Breaſt* and *Heart* repair,
For ſure her *Image* is not *worn out there*.

The Grant.

I.

'TWas when the *Tide* of the *returning* day
Began to chaſe ill forms away,
When pious Dreams the Senſe employ,
And all within is *Innocence* and *Joy*,
My Melancholy, thoughtful Mind
O'recome at length, to ſleep reſign'd;
Not common ſleep, for I was bleſt
With ſomething more *divine*, more *ſweet* than *reſt*.

II.

She who her fine-wrought Clay had lately left,
Of whoſe ſweet *Form* I was bereft,
Was by *kind* Fancy to me brought,
And made the Object of my *happy* thought.
Clad ſhe was all in Virgin white,
And ſhone with *Imperial* light;
A radiant *glory* Crown'd her head,
She ſtream'd with *Light* and *Love*, and thus ſhe ſaid.

III.

And why this Grief and Paſſion for the *Bleſt?*
Let all your Sorrows with me *reſt*.
My ſtate is Bliſs, but I ſhould live
Yet much more happy, would you ceaſe to grieve.
Dry up your tears (Dear Friend) and be
Happy in *my* Felicity.
By this your *wiſdom* you'll approve,
Nay (what you'd moſt of all commend) your *Love*.

IV.

She ſpake, diſſolv'd I lay and overcome,
And was with Extaſie ſtruck dumb;
But ah the fierce tumultuous joy
Its own weak Being, *haſten'd* to deſtroy.
To ſee that lovely Form appear
My Spirits in ſuch commotion were,
Sleep could no more their force controul,
They ſhook their Fetters off, and free'd my *unwilling* Soul.

V. What

V.

What Bliſs do we oft to *Deluſion* owe!
Who would not ſtill be *cheated* ſo!
Opinion's and Ingredient
That goes ſo far to make up true Content,
That even a *Dream* of Happineſs
With *real* joy the Soul does bleſs;
Let me but always *dream* of this,
And I will envy none their *waking* Bliſs.

The Aſpiration.

I.

HOw long great God, how muſt I
Immur'd in this dark Priſon lye!
Where at the Grates and Avenues of *ſenſe*
My Soul muſt *watch* to have *Intelligence.*
Where but faint gleams of thee ſalute my ſight,
Like *doubtful* Moon-ſhine in a *Cloudy* night.
When ſhall I leave this Magic Sphere,
And be all Mind, all Eye, all Ear!

II.

How Cold this Clime! and yet my ſenſe
Perceives even *here* thy Influence.
Even here thy ſtrong Magnetic Charms I feel,
And pant and tremble like the *Amorous* ſteel.
To lower good, and Beauties leſs Divine
Sometimes my *erroneous Needle* does decline
But yet (ſo ſtrong the *ſympathy*)
It *turns*, and *points* again to thee.

III.

I long to ſee this Excellence
Which at ſuch *diſtance* ſtrikes my ſenſe.
My impatient Soul ſtruggles to diſengage
Her wings from the confinement of her Cage.
Would'ſt thou *great Love* this Priſoner once ſet free,
How would ſhe haſten to be *link'd* to thee!

She'd

She'd for no Angels Conduct ſtay,
But fly, and love on all the way.

The Defence.

I.

THat *I* am colder in my Friendſhip grown,
My Faith and Conſtancy you blame,
But ſure th' inconſtancy is all your own,
I am, but *you* are not the ſame,
The flame of Love muſt needs expire
If you ſubſtract what ſhould maintain the fire.

II.

While to the Laws of vertue you were true,
You had, and might retain my heart;
Now give me leave to turn Apoſtate too,
Since you do from your ſelf depart.
Thus the *Reform'd* are counted free
From *Schiſm*, tho they deſert the *Roman* See.

III.

The ſtricteſt Union to be found below
Is that which Soul and Body tyes,
They all the *Myſteries* of Friendſhip know,
And with each other ſympathiſe.
And yet the Soul will bid adieu
T' her *much diſtemper'd* Mate, as *I* leave you.

The Retractation.

I.

I'Ve often charg'd all ſublunary bliſs
With vanity and emptineſs:
You Woods and Streams have heard me oft complain
How all things, how even *your* delights were vain.
Methought *I* could with one ſhort ſimple view
Glance o're all human joys, and ſee them through.
But now great *Preacher* pardon me,

I cannot wholly to thy charge agree,
For *Muſick* ſure and *Friendſhip* have no *vanity*:

II.

No, each of theſe is a firm *maſſy* joy,
Which tho eternal, will not cloy.
Here may the *Venturous* Soul love on, and find,
Graſp what ſhe can, that more remains behind.
Such *Depths* of joy theſe living *Springs* contain
As Man t' Eternity can never *drain*.
Theſe Sweets the *truth* of Heaven prove,
Only there's *greater* Bliſs with Saints above,
Becauſe they've *better Muſick* there, and *firmer Love*.

The PROSPECT.

I.

WHat a ſtrange *moment* will *that* be
My Soul, how full of Curioſity,
When wing'd, and ready for thy eternal flight
Tho th' utmoſt edges of thy tottering Clay,
Hovering and wiſhing longer ſtay
Thou ſhalt advance, and have *Eternity* in *ſight!*
When juſt about to try that unknown Sea,
What a ſtrange *moment* will *that* be!

II.

But yet how much *more* ſtrange that ſtate
When looſen'd from th' embrace of this cloſe mate
Thou ſhalt at *once* be *plung'd* in Liberty,
And move as ſwift and active as a Ray
Shot from the lucid *ſpring* of day!
Thou who juſt now was clogg'd with dull Mortality,
How wilt thou bear the mighty change, how know
Whether thou'rt then the *ſame* or no!

III.

Then to ſtrange Manſions of the air
And ſtranger Company muſt thou repair!
What a new Scene of things will then appear!

This

This World thou by *degrees* waſt taught to know
Which *leſſen'd* thy ſurpriſe below,
But Knowledge all at *once* will *overflow* thee *there*.
That World as the *firſt* man did *this*, thou'lt ſee,
Ripe-grown, in full maturity.

IV.

There with bright Splendours muſt thou dwell,
And be--what only thoſe pure Forms can tell.
There muſt thou live a while, gaze and admire,
Till the great Angel's Trump this Fabrick ſhake,
And all the ſlumbring Dead awake,
Then to thy old, forgotten ſtate muſt thou retire.
This Union then will ſeem as ſtrange, or more,
Than thy new Liberty before.

V.

Now for the greateſt Change prepare,
To ſee the only Great, the only Fair.
Vail now thy feeble eyes, gaze and be bleſt;
Here all thy turns and Revolutions ceaſe,
Here's all Serenity and Peace:
Thou'rt to the *Center* come, the native ſeat of *reſt*.
There's now no further change nor need there be;
When *One* ſhall be *Variety*.

The RETURN.

I.

DEar Contemplation my Divineſt Joy,
When I thy ſacred Mount aſcend
What Heavenly ſweets my Soul employ!
Why can't I there my days for ever ſpend?
When I have conquer'd thy ſteep Heights with Pain
What pity 'tis that I muſt down again!

II.

And yet I muſt; my Paſſions would rebel
Should I too long continue here:
No, here I muſt not think to *dwell*,

But

But mind the Duties of my proper Sphere.
So Angels, tho they Heaven's Glories know,
Forget not to attend their Charge below.

The 137 Pſalm Paraphraſed to the 7th. Verſe.

I.

BEneath a reverend gloomy ſhade,
Where *Tigris* and *Euphrates* cut their way,
With folded Arms and Heads ſupinely laid
We ſate, and wept out all the tedious day,
Within its Banks Grief could not be
Contain'd, when, *Sion*, we remember'd thee.

II.

Our Harps with which we oft have ſung
In ſolemn ſtrains the great *Jehovah*'s Praiſe,
Our Warbling Harps upon the Trees we hung,
Too deep our grief to hear their pleaſing Lays.
Our Harps were ſad, as well as we,
And tho by Angels touch'd, would yield no *Harmony*.

III.

But they who forc'd us from our ſeat,
The Happy Land, and ſweet abode of Reſt,
Had one way left to be more cruel yet,
And ask'd a Song from hearts with grief oppreſt.
Let's hear, ſay they, upon the Lyre
One of the *Anthems* of your *Hebrew Quire*.

IV.

How can we frame our voice to ſing
The Hymns of Joy, Feſtivity and Praiſe
To thoſe who're Aliens to *our Heavenly* King,
And want a *taſte* for ſuch exalted Layes?
Our Harps will here refuſe to ſound;
An *Holy Song* is due to *Holy ground*.

V.

No, deareſt *Sion*, if we can
So far forget thy Melancholy ſtate

As now thou mourn'ſt, to ſing one chearful ſtrain,
This ill be added to our Ebb of *Fate*;
Let neither Harp nor Voice e're try
One *Hallelujah* more, but ever ſilent lye.

The 139 Pſalm *Paraphraſed to the* 14 Verſe.

I.

IN vain, great God, in vain I try
T' eſcape thy quick all-ſearching eye.
Thou with one *undivided* view
Doſt look the whole Creation through.
The unſhap'd *Embryo's* of my mind
Not yet to Form or Likeneſs wrought,
The tender *rudiments* of thought
Thou ſee'ſt, before ſhe can her own *Conception* find.

II.

My private Walks to thee are known,
In *Solitude* I'm not alone;
Thou round my Bed a Guard doſt keep,
Thy eyes are open, while mine ſleep.
My ſofteſt Whiſpers reach thy ear:
'Tis vain to fancy ſecrecy;
Which way ſo e're I turn thou'rt there,
I am all round *beſet* with thy *Immenſity*.

III.

I can't wade through this Depth, I find,
It drowns and ſwallows up my Mind.
'Tis like thy immenſe Deity,
I cannot fathom that, or thee.
Where then ſhall I a refuge find
From thy bright comprehenſive Eye?
Whither, O whither ſhall I fly,
What place is not poſſeſt by thy all-filling Mind!

IV.

If to the heavenly Orbs I fly
There is thy Seat of Majeſty.

If

If down to Hell's Abyſs I go
There I am ſure to meet thee too.
Should I with the ſwift wings of Light
Seek ſome remote and unknown Land,
Thou ſoon would'ſt overtake my flight,
And all my Motions rule with thy *long-reaching* Hand.

V.

Should I t' avoid thy piercing ſight,
Retire behind the skreen of night,
Thou canſt with one cœleſtial ray
Diſpel the ſhades and make it day.
Nor need'ſt thou by ſuch Mediums ſee,
The force of thy clear radiant ſight,
Depends not on our groſſer light;
On Light thou ſitt'ſt *enthron'd*, 'tis *ever* Day with *thee*.

VI.

The *Springs* which Life and Motion give
Are thine, by thee I move and live.
My Frame has nothing hid from thee,
Thou know'ſt my whole *Anatomy*.
T' an Hymn of Praiſe I'le tune my Lyre;
How amazing is this work of thine!
With *dread* I into my *ſelf* retire,
For tho the *Metal's baſe*, the *Stamp* is all *divine*.

To Dr. Plot, *on his Natural Hiſtory of* Stafford-ſhire.

I.

WHat ſtrange Perverſity is this of Man!
When 'twas a *Crime* to taſte th' *inlightning* Tree
He could not *then* his hand refrain,
None then ſo *inquiſitive*, ſo Curious as he.
But now he has *Liberty* to try and know
God's whole *Plantation* below;
Now the Angelic fruit may be
Taſted by all whoſe Arms can *reach* the Tree:
H' is now by *Licence careleſs* made,
The *Tree* neglects to *climb*, and *ſleeps* beneath the *Shade*.

II.

Such drowſie *ſedentary* Souls have they
Who could to *Patriarchal* years live on
Fix'd to *Hereditary* Clay
And know no Climate but their *own.*
Contracted to their narrow *Sphere*
Reſt before *Knowledge* they prefer,
And of this Globe wherein they dwell
No more than of the Heavenly Orbs can tell.
As if by Nature plac'd below
Not on this Earth to *dwell*, but to take *root* and *grow.*

III.

Dull Souls, why did great Nature take ſuch care
To write in ſuch a *Splendid* character;
If Man the only thing below
That can pretend her hand to know
Her fair-writ Volume does deſpiſe,
And tho deſign'd for *Wiſdom* won't be *wiſe?*
Th' Almighty gets no *Praiſe* from this dull kind,
The Sun was never worſhip'd by the *Blind.*
Such Ignorance can ne're *Devotion* raiſe,
They will want *Wiſdom* and their Maker *Praiſe.*

IV.

They only can this Tribute *duely* yield
Whoſe active Spirits range abroad,
Who traverſe o're all Nature's field
And view the great Magnificence of God.
They ſee the hidden wealth of Nature's ſtore
Fall down, and *Learnedly* adore;
But they *moſt* juſtly yet this Tribute pay
Who do't *Contemplate* only, but *diſplay,*
Comment on Nature's Text, and to the ſenſe
Expoſe her latent Excellence,
Who like the Sun, not only *travel* or'e
The World, but give it *light* that others may adore.

V.

In th' Head of theſe *Heroic Few*
Our Learned Author firſt appears in view,

Whoſe

Whoſe ſearching Genius like the Lamp of day
Does the Earth's Furniture diſplay,
Nor ſuffers to lye bury'd and unknown
Nature's rich Talent or his own.
Drake and *Columbus* do in thee revive,
And we from thy *Reſearch* as much receive.
Thou art as great as they, for 'tis all one
New Worlds to *find*, or *nicely* to *deſcribe* the *known*.

VI.

On Mighty *Hero*, our whole Iſle ſurvey,
Advance thy Standard, conquer all the way.
Let nothing but the *Sea* controul
The Progreſs of thy active Soul.
Act like a pious Courteous *Ghoſt*,
And to Mankind retrieve what's *loſt*.
With thy victorious charitable hand
Point out the hidden *Treaſures* of our Land.
Envy or *Ignorance* do what they will,
thou haſt a *Bleſſing* from the *Muſes Hill*.
Great be thy Spirit as thy Works divine,
Shew *thou* thy *Maker*'s Praiſe, we *Poets* will ſing *thine*.

The EXCHANGE.

I.

WHen *Corydon* had loſt his Liberty
And felt the Tyrants heavy chain;
He ſwore, could he but once get free,
He'd never, no, he'd never love again.

II.

But ſtay dull Shepherd, if you *quench* your fire,
Too *dear* you will buy your *Liberty*:
Let not ſuch vigorous heats *expire*,
I'll teach the how to *love*, and yet be *free*.

III.

Take bright *Urania* to thy Amarous breaſt,
To her thy *flaming* heart reſign;

Void not the *room*, but change the *gueſt*,
And let thy *ſenſual* love commence *Divine*.

IV.

The Swain obey'd, and when he once had known
This *fore-taſte* of the joys above,
He vow'd, tho he *might* be his own,
Yet he would ever, yes, he'd ever love.

The REFINEMENT.

I.

WEll, 'twas a hard Decree of Fate,
My Soul, to *Clip* thy *pinions* ſo,
To make thee leave thy pure Ethereal ſtate
And breath the Vapours of the Sphere below,
Where he that can pretend to have
Moſt Freedom, 's ſtill his *body*'s Slave.

II.

Was e're a Subſtance ſo divine
With ſuch an unlike Conſort joyn'd?
Did ever things ſo wide, ſo cloſe combine
As maſſy Clods and Sun-beams, Earth and mind?
When yet two *Souls* can ne're agree
In *Friendſhip*, but by *parity*.

III.

Unequal match! what wilt thou do,
My Soul, to raiſe thy *Plumes* again?
How wilt thou this groſs vehicle ſubdue,
And thy firſt Bliſs, firſt Purity obtain?
Thy Conſort how wilt thou refine,
And be again *all o're* divine?

IV.

Fix on the Sovereign Fair thy eye,
And kindle in thy breaſt a flame;
Wind up thy Paſſions to a pitch ſo high
Till they melt down, and rarify thy frame.
Like the great *Prophet* then aſpire,
Thy *Chariot* will like *his*, be *Fire*.

To

To MELANCHOLY.

I.

Myſterious Paſſion, *deareſt* Pain,
Tell me, what wondrous Charms are theſe
With which thou doſt *torment* and *pleaſe*,
I *grieve* to be thy *Slave*, yet would not *Freedom* gain.
No Tyranny like thine we know,
That half ſo cruel e'er appear'd,
And yet thou'rt *lov'd* as well as *fear'd*,
Perhaps the *only Tyrant* that is ſo.

II.

Long have I been thy Votary,
Thou'ſt led me out to Woods and Groves,
Made'ſt me deſpiſe all other Loves,
And give up all my *Paſſions*, all my *Soul* to thee.
Thee for my *firſt* Companion did I chuſe,
Firſt, even before my *darling Muſe*;
And yet I know of thee no more
Than thoſe who never did thy Shrine adore.

III.

Thou'rt Myſtery and Riddle all,
Like thoſe thou inſpireſt, thou lov'ſt to be
In *Darkneſs* and *Obſcurity*.
Even learned *Athens* thee an *unknown God* might call.
Strange Contraries in thee combine,
Both *Hell* and *Heaven* in thee meet,
Thou greateſt bitter, greateſt ſweet,
No *Pain* is like *thy* Pain, no *Pleaſure* too like *thine*.

IV.

'Tis the grave Doctrin of the Schools
That Contraries can never be
Conſiſtent in the *high'ſt* Degree,
But thou muſt ſtand exempt from their dull narrow Rules.
And yet 'tis ſaid the brighteſt Mind
Is that which is by thee refin'd.
See here a *greater* Myſtery,
Thou mak'ſt us *wiſe*, yet *ruin'ſt* our *Philoſophy*.

The

The DISCONTENT.

I.

NOt that it is not made my Fate
To ſtand upon the dangerous heights of ſtate,
Nor that I cannot be poſſeſt
Of th' hidden treaſures of the *Eaſt*,
Nor that I cannot bath in Pleaſures ſpring
And rifle all the ſweets which Nature's gardens bring
Do I repine, my Deſtiny,
I can all theſe *deſpiſe* as well as you *deny*.

II.

It ſhall not diſcompoſe my mind
Though not one Star above to me prove kind.
Their influence may ſway the *Sea*,
But make not the leaſt change in *me*.
They neither can *afflict* my ſtate, nor *bleſs*,
Their greateſt *gifts* are *ſmall*, and my *deſires* are *leſs*.
My Veſſel bears but little *ſail*,
What need I then a full and ſwelling *gale*?

III.

And yet I'm diſcontented too,
Perhaps y' aſpiring Souls as much as *you*;
We both in equal trouble live,
But for much different *Cauſes* grieve;
You, that theſe guilded Joys you can't obtain,
And I, becauſe I know they're *empty* all and *vain*.
You ſtill *purſue* in hopes to *find*,
I ſtand and dare not *flatter* on my mind.

IV.

This *Tree* of *Knowledge* is, I ſee,
Still *fatal* to poor man's *felicity*.
That which yields others great repaſt,
Can't pleaſe my new *enlighten'd* taſte.
Before, tho I could nothing *ſolid* find,
Yet ſtill with ſpecious *Proſpects* I could pleaſe my mind.
Now all the fartheſt I can ſee
Is one perpetual *Round* of Vanity.

Beau-

Beauty.

I.

Beſt Object of the Paſſion moſt divine,
What excellence can Nature ſhew
In all her various ſtore *below*,
Whoſe Charmes may be Compar'd to thine?
Even *Light* it ſelf is therefore fair
Only becauſe it makes *thy* Sweets appear.

II.

Thou ſtreaming Splendor of the face divine
What in the Regions *above*,
Do Saints like thee adore or love,
What excellence is there like thine?
I except not the *Divinity*.
That great and Sovereign good, for thou art *He*.

III.

He's Beauties vaſt Abyſs and boundleſs Sea,
The Primitive and greateſt Fair,
All his Perfections *Beauties* are,
Beauty is all the Deity.
Some ſtreams from this vaſt Ocean flow,
And that is all that pleaſes, All that's *Fair* below.

IV.

Divine Perfection who alone art all
That various *Scene* of Excellence
Which pleaſes either *mind* or *ſenſe*,
Tho thee by different names we call!
Search Nature through, thou ſtill wilt be
The *Sum* of all that's good in her *Variety*.

V.

Love, that moſt active Paſſion of the mind,
Whoſe roving Flame does traverſe o're
All Nature's good, and reach for more,
Still to thy *magic Sphere*'s confin'd.
'Tis *Beauty* all we can deſire,
Beautie's the *native Manſion* of Loves *Fire*.

VI.

Thoſe finer Spirits who from the Croud retire
To ſtudy Nature's artful Scheme,
Or ſpeculate a Theorem,
What is't but *Beauty* they admire?
And they too who enamour'd are
Of *Virtue*'s Face, love her becauſe ſhe's *Fair*.

VII.

No Empire, Sovereign Beauty, is like thine,
Thou reign'ſt *unrival'd* and *alone*,
And *univerſal* is thy Throne,
Stoicks themſelves to thee reſign.
From Paſſions be they ne'er ſo free
Something they needs muſt love, and that is *Thee*.

VIII.

He whom we all adore, that mighty He,
Owns thy ſupreme Dominion,
And happy lives in thee alone,
We're bleſt in *him*, and He in *thee*:
In thee he's *infinitely* bleſt,
Thou art the *inmoſt Center* of his *Reſt*.

IX.

Pleas'd with thy Form which in his Eſſence ſhin'd,
Th' Almighty choſe to multiply
This *Flower* of his Divinity
And leſſer Beauties ſoon deſign'd.
The unform'd Chaos he remov'd,
Tinctur'd the Maſs with *thee*, and then it *lov'd*.

X.

But do not thou my Soul, fixt here remain,
All Streams of Beauty here below
Do from that immenſe Ocean flow,
And thither they ſhould lead *again*.
Trace then theſe Streams, till thou ſhalt be
At length o[illegible]'whelm'd in Beauty's *boundleſs Sea*.

Love.

I.

IMperial Paſſion! Sacred Fire!
When we of *meaner* Subjects ſing,
Thou tun'ſt our Harps, thou doſt our Souls inſpire,
'Tis *Love* directs the Quill, 'tis *Love* ſtrikes every String.
But where's *another* Deity
T'inſpire the Man that ſings of *thee?*

II.

W'are by miſtaken *Chymiſts* told,
That the moſt active Part of all
The various *Compound* caſt in Nature's *Mould*,
Is that which they *Mercurial Spirit* call.
But ſure 'tis *Love* they ſhould have ſaid,
Without this even *their Spirit* is *Dead.*

III.

Love's the great *Spring* of Nature's *Wheel*,
Love does the Maſs pervade and move,
What ſcapes the *Sun's*, does *thy* warm Influence feel,
The Univerſe is kept in tune by Love.
Thou Nature giv'ſt her *Sympathy*,
The *Center* has its *Charm* from thee.

IV.

Love did great *Nothing's* barren Womb
Impregnate with his genial Fire;
From this firſt Parent did all Creatures come,
Th'Almighty *will'd*, and made all by *Deſire.*
Nay more, among the Sacred *Three*,
The *third Subſiſtence* is from thee.

V.

The happieſt Order of the Bleſt
Are thoſe whoſe *Tide* of *Love's* moſt *high*,
The bright *Seraphick* Hoſt; who're more poſſeſt
Of good, becauſe more like the Deity.
T' him they advance as they improve
Their noble *Heat*, for *God is Love.*

VI.

VI.

Shall then a Paſſion ſo Divine
Stoop down and *Mortal* Beauties know?
Nature's great Statute Law did ne're deſign
That *Heavenly* fire ſhould kindle here *below*;
Let it aſcend and dwell above,
The proper *Element* of Love.

The Conſummation, *A Pindarick Ode.*

I.

THe riſe of Monarchies, and their *long*, *weighty* fall
My Muſe out-ſoars; ſhe proudly leaves behind
The Pomps of Courts, ſhe leaves our little *All*,
To be the *humble* Song of a leſs reaching Mind.
In vain I curb her tow'ring flight;
All I can here preſent's too ſmall.
She preſſes on, and now has loſt their ſight,
She flyes, and haſtens to relate
The laſt and dreadful Scene of Fate,
Nature's great ſolemn Funeral.
I ſee the mighty Angel ſtand
Cloath'd with a Cloud, and Rain-bow round his head,
His right Foot on the Sea, his other on the Land,
He lifted up his dreadful Arm, and thus he ſaid;
By the Myſterious great Three-one
Whoſe Power we fear, and Truth adore
I ſwear the Fatal Thred is ſpun,
Nature ſhall breath her laſt, and *Time ſhall be no more.*
The Antient Stager of the Day
Has run his Minutes out, and numbr'd all his way.
The parting *Iſthmus* is thrown down
And all ſhall now be overflown.
Time ſhall no more her *under-current* know
But one with great Eternity ſhall grow,
Their ſtreams ſhall *mix*, and in one *Circling* Chanel flow.

II.

He ſpake. Fate writ the Sentence with her Iron Pen,
And mighty Thundrings ſaid, *Amen.*
What dreadful ſound's this ſtrikes my ear?
'Tis ſure th' Arch-angel's Trump I hear,
Nature's great Paſſing-bell, the *only* Call
Of Gods that will be heard by *all.*
The Univerſe takes the Alarm, the Sea
Trembles at the great Angel's ſound,
And roars almoſt as loud as he,
Seeks a new Chanel, and would fain run under-ground.
The Earth it ſelf does no leſs quake,
And all throughout, down to the Center ſhake,
The Graves uncloſe, and the deep Sleepers there awake.
The Sun's *arreſted* in his way,
He dares not forward go,
But wondring ſtands at the great hurry here below.
The Stars forget their Laws, and like looſe Planets ſtray.
See how the Elements reſign
Their numerous charge, the ſcatter'd Attoms home repair,
Some from the Earth, ſome from the Sea, ſome from the (Air:
They know the great Alarm,
And in confus'd mixt numbers ſwarm,
Till rang'd and ſever'd by the *Chymiſtry* divine.
The Father of Mankind's amaiz'd to ſee
The Globe too narrow for his Progeny.
But 'tis the *cloſing* of the Age,
And *all* the *Actors* now at once muſt Grace the *Stage.*

III.

Now Muſe exalt thy wing, be bold and dare,
Fate does a wondrous Scene prepare;
The *Central* fire which hitherto did burn
Dull like a Lamp in a moiſt clammy Urn,
Fann'd by the breath divine begins to glow,
The Fiends are all amaz'd below.
But that will no Confinement know,
Breaks through its Sacred Fence, and plays more free
Than thou with all thy vaſt *Pindarick* Liberty.

Nature

Nature does ſick of a ſtrong *Fever* lye:
The Fire the ſubterraneous Vaults does ſpoil;
The Mountains ſweat, the Sea does boil;
The Sea, her mighty *Pulſe*, beats high;
The Waves of Fire more proudly rowl;
The Fiends in their deep Caverns howl,
And with the frightful Trumpet mix their hideous Cry.
Now is the Tragic Scene begun;
The Fire in Triumph marches on; (*Sun.*
The Earth's girt round with Flames, and ſeems another

IV.

But whither does this lawleſs Judgment roam?
Muſt *all* promiſcuouſly expire
A Sacrifice in *Sodom*'s Fire?
Read thy Commiſſion, *Fate*; ſure *all* are not thy due,
No, thou muſt ſave the virtuous Few.
But where's the Angel Guardian to avert the Doom?
Lo, with a mighty Hoſt he's come:
I ſee the parted Clouds give way;
I ſee the Banner of the Croſs diſplay.
Death's Conquerour in Pomp appears,
In his right Hand a Palm he bears,
And in his Looks he wears:
Th' illuſtrious Glory of this Scene
Does the deſpairing Saints inſpire
With Joy, with Rapture and Deſire;
Kindles the *higher* Life that *dormant* lay within.
Th' awaken'd Virtue does its Strength diſplay
Melts and refines their droſſy Clay;
New-caſt into a pure Æthereal Frame
They fly and mount aloft in Vehicles of Flame.
Slack here my Muſe thy roving Wing,
And now the World's *untun'd*, let down thy *high-ſet*
(String.

Free-

Freedom.

I.

I Do not ask thee Fate, to give
This little ſpan a long Reprieve.
Thy pleaſures here are all ſo poor and vain,
I care not hence how ſoon I'm gone.
Date as thou wilt my Time, I ſhan't complain;
May I but ſtill live free, and call it all my own.

II.

Let my Sand ſlide away apace;
I care not, ſo I hold the Glaſs.
Let me my Time, my Books, my Self enjoy;
Give me from Cares a ſure retreat;
Let no impertinence my Hours imploy,
That's in one word, kind Heaven, let me ne're be great.

III.

In vain from Chains and Fetters free
The great Man boaſts of Liberty.
He's pinnion'd up by formal Rules of State;
Can ne're from Noiſe and Duſt retire;
He's haunted ſtill by Crouds that round him wait,
His lot's to be in Pain, as that of Fools t' admire.

IV.

Mean while the Swain has calm repoſe,
Freely he comes and freely goes.
Thus the bright Stars whoſe ſtation is more high,
Are fix'd, and by ſtrict meaſures move,
While lower Planets wanton in the Sky,
Are bound to no ſet Laws, but humourſomly rove.

To his Muse.

I.

COme Muſe, let's caſt up our Accounts, and ſee
How much you are in Debt to me:
You've reign'd thus long the Miſtreſs of my Heart,
You've been the ruling Planet of my Days,
In my ſpare-Hours you've had your part,
Ev'n now my ſervile Hand your ſovereign *Will* obeys.
Too great ſuch Service to be Free,
Tell me what I'm to have for being thy Votary.

II.

You have Preferments in your Gift, you ſay,
You can with Gold my Service pay;
I fear thy Boaſt, your ſacred Hill I'm told
In a poor, curs'd and barren Country lies;
Beſides, what's State to me, or Gold,
Theſe you long ſince have taught me to deſpiſe.
To put me off with this, would be
Not to reward, but tax my ill Proficiency.

III.

But Fame you ſay will make amends for all,
This you your ſovereign Bleſſing call,
The only laſting Good that never dies,
A Good which never can be bought too dear,
Which all the Wiſe and Virtuous prize,
The *Gods* too with Delight their *Praiſes* hear.
This ſhall my Portion be, you ſay,
You'l crown my Head with an *immortal Bay*.

IV.

Give me a place leſs high, and more ſecure,
This dangerous Good I can't endure.
The peaceful Banks which profound ſilence keep
The little Boat ſecurely paſſes by,
But where with noiſe the Waters creep
Turn off with Care, for treacherous Rocks are nigh.
Then Muſe farewell, I ſee your ſtore
Can't pay for what is paſt, and I can Truſt no more.

Of

Of the Advantages of Thinking.

MAN being the only Creature here below deſign'd for a ſociable Life, has two Faculties to diſtinguiſh him from other Creatures, *Thinking* and *Speaking*. The one, to fit him for the ſociety of others; and the other, to qualifie him alſo for his own. As to the later of theſe Faculties, there's no fear of its gathering Ruſt for want of uſe. We are rather apt to ſpeak too much; and the moſt Reſerv'd have reaſon to pray with the Pſalmiſt, *Set a watch O Lord, before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips.*

But the former, is that which generally lies *fallow* and neglected; as may be gueſs'd from the intemperate uſe of the other. There are few indeed, that are *capable* of Thinking to any great purpoſe: but among thoſe that *are*, there are fewer that *employ* this excellent Talent. And for ought I know, however ſtrange it may ſeem, among the Ingenious and well Educated, there are as few *Thinkers* as among the Herd of the Vulgar and Illiterate. For either they live a *Popular* Life; and then what for Buſineſs, Pleaſures, Company, Viſits, with a world of other Impertinencies, there's ſcarce room for ſo much as a Morning Reflexion. Or elſe, they live *retir'd*, and then either they doze away their time in Drowſineſs and brown Studies; or, if Brisk and Active, they lay themſelves out wholly upon devouring Books, and making Common Places; and ſcarce entertain their Solitude with a Meditation once in a Moon.

But 'tis merely for want of Thinking that they can allow themſelves in doing ſo. For by a little of this, they would ſoon diſcover, that of all the Methods of Improvement that can be uſed, there is none ſo advantagious as Thinking; either for our Intellectuals or our Morals; to make us Wiſer, or to make us Better. And firſt, for our Intellectuals. 'Tis the perfection of our Rational part to *know*; that is, to be able to frame clear and diſtinct Conceptions, to form right Judgments, and to draw true Conſequences from one thing to another. Now beſides, that the Powers of the Mind are made more bright, vigorous, and active by uſe, as all other Faculties are; there is this further advantage, that by habitual thinking the Object is made more Familiar to the Underſtanding; the Habitudes and Relations of Idea's one towards another, by frequent comparing, become more viſible and apparent; and conſequently, 'tis more eaſie to divide what ought to be divided, and to compound what ought to be compounded; wherein conſiſts the ſum of all *Truth* and *Science*.

Reading is indeed very excellent and *uſeful* to this purpoſe; but Thinking is *neceſſary*. This may do without the other, as appears in the firſt Inventers of Arts and Sciences; who were fain to think out their way to the Receſſes of Truth; but the other can never do, without this. Reading without Thinking, may indeed make a rich *Common Place*, but 'twill never make a rich *Head*; it may, indeed bring in a great ſtore of *Hyle*, but 'tis yet *without form* and *void*, till Thinking, like the Seminal Spirit, agitates the dead ſhapeleſs Lump, and works it up into Figure and Symmetry.

But

But of what advantage Thinking is to the Advancement of Knowledge, will further appear, by conſidering ſome of the chief Impediments of it; and how they are removed by Thinking. And the firſt that I ſhall mention, is the Prejudice of Infancy. We form infinite raſh Judgments of Things, before we duly underſtand any Thing; and theſe grow up with us, take root, ſpread and multiply; till, after long uſe and cuſtom, we miſtake them for common Notions and dictates of Nature; and then we think it a crime to go about to unlearn or eradicate them. And as long as we ſtand thus affected, we are condemn'd to Errours and perpetual Wandrings. So great reaſon had the excellent *Des-Cartes* to lay the foundation of his Philoſophy in an *Equipoiſe* of Mind; and to make the removal of theſe Prejudices the very entrance and beginning of Wiſdom.

But now when a Man ſets upon a courſe of Thinking, nothing will be ſo obvious as to conſider, that ſince we come ſo late to the perfect uſe of our Reaſon; among thoſe many Judgments we have made, 'tis very likely the major part are Falſe and Erroneous. And this is a fair ſtep to the ſhaking off thoſe Infant-Prejudices; at leaſt he will be thereby induc'd not to believe any thing, the rather, becauſe he had given it ſuch early Entertainment. From this general reflection he proceeds to examin the Things themſelves. And *now* he is a capable Judge, can hear both ſides with an indifferent Ear, is determin'd only by the moments of Truth; and ſo retracts his *paſt* Errors, and has the beſt Moral Security againſt any for the *future*.

Another great hindrance to Knowledg is the wrong *perception* of Things. When the ſimple Idea's of our Minds are confus'd, our Judgments can never proceed without Errour. 'Tis like a Fault in the firſt concoction, which is never corrected in either of the other. For how can I judge whether the Attribute agree to the Subject, if my Notion of both be *confus'd* and *obſcure*? But now, the only Cauſe of the confuſedneſs of our Notions, next to the natural inability of our Faculties, is want of *Attention* and cloſe *Application* of Mind. We don't *dwell* enough upon the object; but ſpeculate it tranſiently and in haſte; and then, no wonder that we conceive it by halves. Thinking therefore is a proper Remedy for this Defect alſo.

Another great hindrance to Knowledg is *ambiguity of Terms and Phraſes*. This has bred a world of confuſion and miſunderſtanding, eſpecially in Controverſies of Religion; a great many of which, if thoroughly ſifted and well compared, will be found to be mere *verbal* Contentions. As may appear from what the excellent Monſieur *Le Blanc* has perform'd in this kind. But now, this is owing merely to want of thinking. There is a latitude in the Phraſe; and one writer not ſufficiently attending to that determinate ſenſe of it which his Adverſary intends, very haſtily and furiouſly denies what the other does not affirm; and he again as furiouſly affirms what this does not deny. So that they are really agreed all along, and yet fight on like Fools in the dark. And there is no hopes they will ever be reconciled, till either they will take the pains to think themſelves, or ſome body elſe will be ſo kind, as to think for 'em.

Another

Another great hindrance to Knowledg is an *over-fond* and *superstitious deference to Authority*, especially that of *Antiquity*. There is nothing that cramps the Parts, and fetters the *understandings* of Men like this strait lac'd humour. Men are resolv'd never to outshoot their forefathers Mark; but write one after another, and so the dance goes round in a Circle; and the World is never the *wiser* for being *older*. Take an instance of this in the *School-men*, and in the best of them, *Aquinas*. 'Tis pleasant to see how that great Wit is oftentimes put to't to maintain some unlucky Authorities, for the salving of which he is forced to such Shifts and Expedients, which he must needs (should he dare to think freely) see through and discern to be false; and yet such a slave was he, that he would rather lose Truth, than go out of the Road to find it. This also makes Men, otherwise Senseful and Ingenious, quote such things many times out of an old dull Author, and with a peculiar Emphasis of Commendation too, as would never pass even in ordinary Conversation; and which they themselves would never have took notice of, had not such an Author said it. But now, no sooner does a Man give himself leave to Think, but he perceives how absurd and unreasonable 'tis, that one Man should prescribe to all Posterity: That Men, like Beasts, should follow the foremost of the Herd; and that venerable *non-sense* should be preferr'd before *new sense*: He considers, that that which we call *Antiquity*, is properly the Nonage of the World; that the sagest of his Authorities were once new; and that there is no other difference between an ancient Author and himself, but

only that of Time; which, if of any advantage, 'tis rather on his ſide, as living in a more refined and mature Age of the World. And thus having caſt off this *Intellectual* ſlavery, like one of the brave Ἐκλεκτικοὶ, mention'd by *Laertius*, he addicts himſelf to no Author, Sect or Party; but freely picks up Truth where-ever he can find it; puts to Sea upon his own Bottom; holds the Stern himſelf; and now, if ever, we may expect new Diſcoveries.

There are other notable Impediments to the improvement of Knowledg, ſuch as Paſſion, Intereſt, fear of being tax'd with Inconſtancy, ſcorn of being inform'd by another, Envy, the humour of Contradiction, and ſometimes Flattery in applauding every thing we hear, and the like. Now as to the manner how all theſe are remov'd by Thinking, it may ſuffice to ſay in general, that they are all obviouſly abſurd and ridiculous; and however unthinking Men may be abuſed by them, yet a free and cloſe Thinker muſt needs quickly perceive that they are ſo: and there is no better Moral way that I know of to be quit of ill Habits, than the being convinc'd of their Folly and Miſchief.

But the greateſt advantage of Thinking is yet behind, that it improves our Morals as well as our Intellectuals; and ſerves to make us Better, as well as Wiſer. This is in a great meaſure included in the other. All therefore that I ſhall further remark concerning it is this, that conſidering the great influence the Underſtanding has upon the Will, there are but two things neceſſary to preſerve us in our Duty. Firſt an habitual Theory of what we ought and ought not to do; and of all the motives and

engage-

engagements to the one and to the other. Secondly, an actual and clear preſence of all this to the Mind, in every Inſtant of Action. And this is for the moſt part the Thinking Man's condition. He does not only Habitually *know*, but Actually *attends* both to his Duty, and to all the engagements for its Performance. He has thoſe Conſiderations almoſt always preſent with him which to others are the Principles of *Repentance*; and this keeps him *in* his Duty, which brings others *to* it; and makes him live like thoſe *Righteous* Perſons, of whom our Saviour ſays, That they *need no Repentance*.

Of the Care and Improvement of Time.

TO be careful how we manage and employ our Time, is one of the *firſt* Precepts that is *taught* in the School of Wiſdom, and one of the *laſt* that is *Learn'd*. The firſt and *leading* Dictate of Prudence is, That a Man propoſe to himſelf his true and beſt Intereſt for his End; and the next is, That he make uſe of all thoſe Means and Opportunities whereby that End is to be attain'd. And betwixt theſe two there is ſuch a cloſe Connexion, that he who does not *do* the *latter*, cannot be ſuppoſed to *intend* the *former*. He that is not careful of his Actions, ſhall never perſwade me that he ſeriouſly propoſes to himſelf his beſt Intereſt, as his *End*; for if he did, he would as ſeriouſly apply himſelf to the Regulation of the *other*, as the *Means*. And ſo he that is not careful of his Time, cannot

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in Reaſon be ſuppoſed to be careful of his Actions; for if he were, he would certainly have a ſpecial Regard to the *opportunity* of their Performance.

But, as I obſerv'd in the beginning, though this Precept be one of the *Elementary* Dictates of Prudence, and ſtands written in the *firſt Page* of the *Book of Wiſdom*; yet ſuch is the Sottiſhneſs and Stupidity of the World, that there is none that is more *ſlowly Learn'd*. And 'tis a prodigious Thing to conſider, that, although among all the *Talents* which are committed to our *Stewardſhip*, Time upon ſeveral accounts is the moſt precious, yet there is not any one of which the generality of Men are more Profuſe and Regardleſs. Tho it be a Thing of that ineſtimable Value, that 'tis not diſtributed to us *intirely*, and at once, like other Bleſſings, but is *dealt* out in Minutes and little Parcels, as if Man were not fit to be truſted with the *intire* Poſſeſſion of ſuch a *choice* Treaſure, yet there are very many that think themſelves ſo *overſtock'd* with it, that inſtead of *husbanding* it to Advantage, the main Buſineſs of their Thoughts is how to rid their Hands of it, and accordingly they catch at every Shadow and Opportunity of *Relief*; ſtrike in at a venture with the next Companion, and ſo the *dead Commodity* be *taken off*, care not who be the *Chapman*. Nay, 'tis obvious to obſerve, that even thoſe Perſons who are Frugal and Thrifty in every thing elſe, are yet extremely Prodigal of their beſt *Revenue*, Time; *Of which alone* (as *Seneca* neatly obſerves) *'tis a Virtue to be Covetous*.

Neither may this Cenſure be faſtned only upon the *unthinking* Multitude, the *Sphere* of whoſe Conſideration

ſideration is ſuppoſed to be very *narrow*, and their Apprehenſion *ſhort-ſighted*; but I obſerve that many of thoſe who ſet up for Wits, and pretend to a more than ordinary Sagacity, and delicacy of Senſe, do notwithſtanding ſpend their Time very *unaccountably*, and live away whole Days, Weeks, and ſometimes Months together, to as little purpoſe (tho it may be not ſo innocently) as if they had been aſleep all the while. And this they are ſo far from being aſhamed to own, that they freely Boaſt of it, and Pride themſelves in it, thinking that it tends to their Reputation, and commends the Greatneſs of their Parts, that they can *ſupport* themſelves upon the Natural *ſtock*, without being beholden to the *Intereſt* that is brought in by Study and Induſtry.

But if their Parts be ſo good as they would have others believe, ſure they are *worth* Improving; if not, they have the more *need* of it. And tho it be an Argument of a *rich* Mind, to be able to *maintain* it ſelf without *Labour*, and *ſubſiſt* without the *Advantages* of Study, yet there is no Man that has ſuch a Portion of Senſe, but will underſtand the uſe of his Time better than to put it to the Trial. Greatneſs of Parts is ſo far from being a diſcharge from *Induſtry*, that I find Men of the moſt exquiſite Senſe in all Ages were always moſt curious of their Time: Nay, the moſt Intelligent of all Created Beings (who may be allow'd to paſs a truer Eſtimate upon Things than the fineſt Mortal Wit) value Time at a high rate. *Let me go* (ſays the Angel to the importunate Patriarch) *for the Day breaketh.* And therefore I very much ſuſpect the Excellency of thoſe Men's Parts, who are diſſolute and careleſs

careleſs miſ-ſpenders of their Time: For if they were Men of any *Thoughts*, how is it poſſible but theſe ſhould be ſome in the Number? (*viz.*) 'That this 'Life is wholly in order to another, and that Time 'is that *ſole Opportunity* that God has given us for 'tranſacting the great Buſineſs of Eternity: That 'our Work is great, and our Day of working ſhort, 'much of which alſo is loſt and render'd uſeleſs, 'through the Cloudineſs and Darkneſs of the *Morn-'ing*, and the thick Vapours and unwholeſome 'Fogs of the *Evening*; the Ignorance and Inadver-'tency of *Youth*, and the Diſeaſes and Infirmities of '*Old Age*: That our Portion of Time is not only 'ſhort, as to its Duration, but alſo uncertain in the 'Poſſeſſion: That the loſs of it is irreparable to the 'Loſer, and profitable to no body elſe: That it ſhall 'be ſeverely accounted for at the great Judgment, 'and lamented in a ſad Eternity.

He that conſiders theſe Things (and ſure he muſt needs be a *very unthinking* Man that does not) will certainly be Choice of his Time, and look upon it no longer as a bare State of *Duration*, but as an *Opportunity*; and conſequently will let no part of it (no *conſiderable* part at leaſt) ſlip away either *Unobſerv'd* or *Unimprov'd*. This is the moſt effectual Way that I know of to ſecure to ones ſelf the *Character* of a Wiſe-man *here*, and the *Reward* of one *hereafter*. Whereas the *vain Enthuſiaſtic* Pretenders to the Gift of Wit, that Trifle away their Time, betray the *Shallowneſs* and *Poverty* of their Senſe to the *diſcerning few*; or whatever they may paſs for here among their fellow Mortals, do moſt infalliby make themſelves *Cheap* in the ſight of *Angels*.

Of

Of SOLITUDE.

IT has been urg'd as an Objection, by ſome *Atheiſtical* Perſons, againſt the Exiſtence of a God, that if there had been ſuch a perfect Being, who was *compleatly* Happy in the Enjoyment of himſelf, he would never have gone about to make a World. Now, tho this Objection contributes nothing to the ſupport of Atheiſm (the Deſign of God in Creating the World being not to *increaſe* his Happineſs, but to *Communicate* it) yet it proceeds upon this true Suppoſition, that *Society* is a *Bleſſing*. It is ſo, and that not only *reſpectively*, and in reference to the preſent Circumſtances of the World, and the Neceſſities of this Life, but alſo *ſimply*, and in its own Nature; ſince it ſhall be an *Acceſſory* to our Bliſs in Heaven, and add many *Moments* to the *weight* of *Glory*. Neither will the Truth of this Aſſertion be at all weaken'd by alledging, that no Benifit or Advantage accrues to God by it; for that it becomes unbeneficial to him (tho a Bleſſing in its own Nature) is purely by accident, becauſe God eminently containing in himſelf all *poſſible* Good, is uncapable of any *New* Acceſſion.

And as Society is in its own Nature an Inſtrument of Happineſs, ſo is it made much more ſo by the Indigencies and Infirmities of Men. Man of all Creatures in the World, is leaſt qualify'd to live alone, becauſe there is no Creature that has ſo many Neceſſities to be reliev'd. And this I take to be one of the great *Arts* of Providence, to ſecure mutual Amity and the *reciprocation* of good turns

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in the World, it being the Nature of Indigency, like common Danger, to indear Men to one another, and make them herd together, like *Fellow-Sailers* in a *Storm*. And this indeed is the true Caſe of Mankind, we all Sail in one *Bottom*, and in a *rough* Sea, and ſtand in need of one anothers Help at every turn, both for the *Neceſſities* and *Refreſhments* of Life. And therefore I am very far from commending the undertaking of thoſe *Aſcetics*, that out of a pretence of keeping themſelves *unſpotted from the World*, take up their Quarters in *Deſarts*, and utterly abandon all Human Society: This is in ſhort (to ſay no more of it) to put themſelves into an incapacity either of *doing* any good to the World, or of receiving any from it: and certainly that can be no deſirable State. No, this *Eremetical* way of Living is utterly inconſiſtent with the Circumſtances and Inclinations of Human Nature; he muſt be a God, *Self-ſufficient* and *Independent* that is fit for this State of abſolute and perfect Solitude, and in this *rigorus* ſenſe, *It is not good for Man* (tho in *Paradice* it ſelf) *to be alone*.

But tho Society, as 'tis oppoſed to a ſtate of perfect and perpetual Solitude, be a Bleſſing, yet conſidering how little of it there is in the World that is *Good*, I think it adviſable for every Man that has Senſe and Thoughts enough, to be his own Companion, (for certainly there is more required to qualifie a Man for his *own* company than for *other* Men's) to be as frequent in his Retirements as he can, and to communicate as little with the World as is conſiſtent with the Duty of doing good, and the diſcharge of the common Offices of Humanity.

'Tis

'Tis true indeed (as *Seneca* ſays) *Miſcenda & alternanda ſunt Solitudo & Frequentia: Solitude and Company are to have their turns, and to be interplaced.* But Wiſe-men uſe to dedicate the largeſt ſhare of their Lives to the former, and let the *beſt* and *moſt* of their Time go to make up the *Canonical Hours* of Study, Meditation and Devotion. And for this, beſides the Practice of Wiſe-men, we have the *Authentic* example of our Bleſſed Lord himſelf, Who, as 'tis reaſonably ſuppoſed (for he had paſs'd the thirtieth Year of his Life before he enter'd upon the Stage of Action, and then alſo ſought all Opportunities to be alone, and oftentimes purchas'd Retirement at the expence of Night-watches) allotted the greateſt part of his little Time here on Earth to Privacy and Retirement; and 'tis highly probable, would have liv'd much more Reſervedly, had not the peculiar Buſineſs of his Function made it neceſſary for him to be converſant in the World. The inclination of our Lord lay more toward the *Contemplative* way of Life, tho the Intereſt of Mankind engaged him oftentimes upon the *Active*. And 'tis very obſervable, that there is ſcarce any one Thing which he vouchſafed to Grace with ſo many Marks and Inſtances of Favour and Reſpect, as he did Solitude. Which are thus ſum'd up by the excellent Pen of a very Great Maſter of Learning and Language: *It was Solitude and Retirement in which Jeſus kept his Vigils; the Deſart places heard him Pray, in a Privacy he was Born, in the Wilderneſs he Fed his Thouſands, upon a Mountain apart he was Transfigured, upon a Mountain he Died, and from a Mountain he aſcended*

The Great Exemplar.

aſcended to his Father. In which Retirements his Devotion certainly did receive the Advantage of convenient Circumſtances, and himſelf in ſuch Diſpoſitions twice had the opportunities of Glory.

Indeed, the *Satisfactions* and *Advantages* of Solitude (to a Perſon that knows how to Improve it) are very great, and far Tranſcending thoſe of a *Secular* and *Popular* Life. Firſt, as to Pleaſure and Satisfaction, whoſoever conſiders the great variety of Mens Humours, the Peeviſhneſs of ſome, the Pride and Conceitedneſs of others, and the Impertinence of moſt; he that conſiders what unreaſonable *Terms of Communion* ſome Perſons impoſe upon thoſe that partake of their Society; how rare 'tis for a Man to light upon a Company, where, as his firſt Salutation, he ſhall not preſently have a Bottle thruſt to his Noſe; he, I ſay, that conſiders theſe and a thouſand more Grievances, wherewith the *Folly* and *Ill-nature* of Men have conſpired to *Burthen* Society, will find, take one time with another, Company is an occaſion of almoſt as much *Diſpleaſure* as *Pleaſure*. Whereas in the mean time the Solitary and Contemplative Man ſits as ſafe in his Retirement as one of *Homers Heroes* in a Cloud, and has this only Trouble from the Follies and Extravagancies of Men, that he *pities* them. He does not, it may be, Laugh ſo loud, but he is better *Pleas'd*: He is not perhaps ſo often *Merry*, but neither is he ſo often *Diſguſted*; he lives to himſelf and God, full of Serenity and Content.

And as the *Pleaſures* and *Satisfactions* of Solitude exceed thoſe of a Popular Life, ſo alſo do the *Advantages*. Of theſe there are two ſorts, *Moral* and *In-*

Intellectual; to both which Solitude is a *particular* Friend. As to the first, it is plain that Solitude is the proper opportunity of Contemplation, which is both the *Foundation* and the *Perfection* of a Religious Life. *It is* (as the same excellent Person forecited says elsewhere of a single Life) *the huge Advantage of Religion, the great Opportunity for the Retirements of Devotion, which being empty of Cares is full of Prayer, being unmingled with the World is apt to Converse with God, and by not feeling the Warmth of a too forward and indulgent Nature, flames out with holy Fires, till it be burning like the Cherubim and the most extasy'd Order of holy and unpolluted Spirits.* And for this Reason 'twas that the Ancients chose to build their Altars and Temples in Groves and Solitary Recesses, thereby intimating, that Solitude was the best opportunity of Religion.

Neither are our *intellectual* Advantages less indebted to Solitude. And here, tho I have in a great measure anticipated this Consideration (there being nothing necessarily required to compleat the Character of a Wise man, besides the knowledg of God and himself) yet I shall not confine my self to this Instance, but deduce the Matter further, and venture to affirm, That all kinds of *Speculative* knowledge as well as *Practical*, are best improv'd by Solitude. Indeed there is much talk about the great Benefit of keeping great Men company, and thereupon 'tis usually reckon'd among the *Disadvantages* of a *Country* Life, that those of that condition want the opportunities of a *Learned Conversation*. But to confess the Truth, I think there is not so much in it as People generally Imagine. In-

deed, were the Souls of Men lodg'd in *transparant Cases*, that we might read their Thoughts; would they *communicate* what they know, were it the fashion to discourse Learnedly, 'twere worth while to frequent the *Cabals* of Great Men: But when it shall be counted a piece of *errant Pedantry*, and defect of good breeding to start any Question of Learning in Company; when every Man is as shy of his Notions as of a *fairy-treasure*, and makes his Head not a Repository or *Exchequer* of Knowledg, but a *Grave* to Bury it in: A Man may be a constant attendant at the *Conclaves* of Learned Men all his Life-long, and yet be no more the wiser for't than a *Book-worm* is for dwelling in *Libraries*. And therefore, to speak ingeniously, I don't see for my part wherein the great Advantage of great Conversation lies, as the Humours of Men are pleas'd to order it. Were I to inform my self in Business, and the management of Affairs, I would sooner talk with a plain illiterate Farmer or Trades-man, than the greatest *Virtuoso* of *The Society*; and as for Learning (which is the only thing they are supposed able to Discourse well of) *that* in point of *Civility* they decline: So that I find I must take refuge at my Study at last, and there *redeem* the Time that I have *lost* among the *Learned*.

Of COURAGE.

ARistotle in his Morals begins the Doctrin of Virtues with *Courage*; which has found work for his Interpreters to assign the Reason of his Method.

thod. But, methinks, there is no great need they should either *Study* or *Differ* much about it. For certainly, among all the Virtues this will justly challenge the *Precedency*, and is the most *Cardinal* and Fundamental part of Morality. This Virtue is pre-required to the *susception* of all the rest. For the very entrance into the School of Wisdom, and a Virtuous Course, is a State of Discipline, Difficulty and Hardship. And therefore 'tis *sapere audè*, a great piece of *daring* and *boldness* to set up for a good Man: Especially, if to the proper Difficulties and Agonies of a Virtuous Engagement, we add those Calamities and Straits it oftentimes exposes us to, through the Malice and Folly of the World. So that as *Plato* writ upon his School, Ἀγεωμέτρητος μηδεὶς εἰσίτω. *Let none enter here that understands not Mathematics*, it may be set as a *Motto* upon the School of Virtue, *Let none enter here that wants Courage*.

And as 'tis necessarily requisite to the *susception* of all other Virtues, so it is their main *Support*, *Guardian* and *Establishment*. Without this, every other Virtue is precarious, and lies at the Mercy of every cross Accident. Without this, let but a Pistol be held to the Breast, and the severest Chastity will be frighted into Compliance; the most Heroic Friendship into Treachery, and the most ardent Piety into renunciation of God and Religion. There is nothing among all the Frailnesses and Uncertainties of this sublunary World so tottering and unstable, as this Virtue of a Coward. He has that within him that upon Occasion will infallibly betray every Virtue he has; and to secure him from Sin, you

muſt keep him from Temptation. This was the Principle the Devil went upon in his encounter with *Job*, *Do but put forth thy Hand*, (ſays he to God) *and touch all that he hath, and he will Curſe thee to thy Face.* He was right enough in the *Propoſition*, tho miſtaken in the *Application*.

Having now ſeen the uſefulneſs of this great Virtue, 'twill be worth while to enquire a little into its Nature. And that the rather becauſe 'tis not only variouſly and falſly Aprehended by *the many*, but too confuſedly and darkly deliver'd even by Moraliſts themſelves.

That which with the Vulgar paſſes for Courage, is certainly nothing elſe but Stupidity, Deſperateneſs or Fool-hardineſs; a Britiſh ſort of *Knight-errantry* in ſeeking out needleſs Encounters, and running into Dangers without Fear or Wit; which is ſo far from having the fore-mention'd property of Courage, of being a Guardian, and Security of our Virtues, that 'tis in it ſelf a Sin.

But are we like to have a better account of it from the Moraliſts? Why they tell you that it is a Mediocrity between Fear and Boldneſs; So *Ariſtotle* in his Ethics. But then as for defining what this Mediocrity is (wherein the very point of the Buſineſs lies) you are as much to ſeek as ever.

Others will tell you that 'tis a firmneſs of Mind in ſuſtaining Evils, and undertaking Dangers. Accordingly they Aſſign two parts of Courage *Suſtinere & Aggredi*. Thus *Epictetus* and the School of the Stoics. But what it is thus firmly to ſuſtain or undertake an Evil, and what Evils are to be thus ſuſtain'd

ſtain'd or undertaken, they either could not, or have not thought fit to acquaint us.

In order therefore to the ſettling the Point in hand, I conſider First in general, That Courage has evil of Pain for its Object; which in ſome circumſtances is to be choſen or ſubmitted to. Whence I form this general Idea of Courage, That 'tis a firm and peremptory Reſolution of Mind to chuſe evil of Pain in right Circumſtances, or when 'tis truly Eligible. This Definition I confeſs runs in general Terms, much like one of *Ariſtotles*; but I intended it for no other. Only it has this advantage above his, that it lays a Foundation for one that is more particular.

For 'tis but here to ſubjoin when an Evil is truly Eligible, and the Idea of Courage will be ſufficiently determinate and expreſs. Now to make a thing Eligible, 'tis neceſſary that ſome way or other it appear good; evil being no way Eligible under its own Formality. And to make an evil put on the nature and appearance of good, two things are neceſſary. 1. That it be a leſſer evil than ſome other; and 2*ly*. That the chuſing of it be a neceſſary Medium for the preventing of that other. Then, and in no other caſe, is evil truly Eligible: and conſequently, we ſhall not be miſtaken in the Idea of Courage, if we define it to be ſuch a firm and conſtant ἕξις, or diſpoſition of Mind, whereby a man is fix'd and determin'd never to dread any evil, ſo far as to decline it when the chuſing it is the only Remedy againſt a greater. And this is moſt eminently ſignalized in the caſe of Martyrdom, when a Man ſubmits to the greateſt evils of Pain, to avoid that much greater one of Sin. This is the very ſummity

and perfection of Courage, that which an *Hannibal* or a *Scipio* could never equal in all their Gallantry and Feats of War: And I dare venture to pronounce, That he who would rather die, or part with any worldly Interest than commit a Sin, can never be a Coward.

And here I cannot but take notice of a false notion of Honour and Courage, whereby the World has been generally abused, especially those Men that make the highest pretensions to both. According to these Mens Measures of things, 'tis sufficient reason to post a Man up for a Coward if he refuse a Duel; and to merit a Badge of Honour from the Herald's Office, if he accept it. These Men would be ready to Laugh at me, I know, as a lover of Paradoxes, should I tell them that their Characters must be quite transposed to make them true. And yet I cannot help it; so it falls out, that he who declines the Duel, is indeed the Man of Honour and Courage; and he who accepts it is the Coward. For he who declines it, despises the obloquy and scorn of the World, that he may approve himself to God and his own Conscience, would rather be pointed and hiss'd at, than be Damn'd; and so chuses a lesser evil to avoid a greater. But he that accepts the Duel, so dreads the loss of his Credit among those whose good Opinion is of no Value, that to avoid it, he chuses to incur Sin and Damnation; and so chuses a greater evil to avoid a less. And if this be Courage, we must strike it out of the Catalogue of the Virtues; for nothing is so, that is not under the direction of *Prudence*; much less what is downright Folly, and the very *exaltation* of Madness.

Of

Of SERIOUSNESS.

SInce I began to consider so far as to make Reflections upon *my self*, the most early and prevailing Dispositions which I observ'd, was an Inclination to *Seriousness*; And since I consider'd the Nature of *Things*, and the Circumstances of Human Life, I found I had reason to thank the kind influence of my Birth for making that my *Temper*, which otherwise I must have been at more Cost to *acquire*.

For tho it be generally reckon'd only as a *Semi-Virtue*, and by some as no Virtue at all; yet certainly nothing is of greater advantage both as to Intellectual and Moral Attainments, than to be of a serious, composed and recollected Spirit. If it be not it self a Virtue, 'tis at least the *Soil* wherein it naturally grows, and the most visible Mark whereby to know those that have it. This is that whereby a *Man* is chiefly distinguish'd from a *Child*, and a *Wise* Man from a *Fool*. For (as the Son of *Syrach* observes) *a Man may be known by his look, and one that has understanding by his Countenance when thou meet'st him*, Eccles. 19. And again speaking of levity and dissoluteness of Behaviour, *A man's attire, excess of laughter and gait shew what he is*; that is, it shews he is none of the *Wisest*. And that this was his true meaning, we may be assured from another Character of his, where he expresly makes the signs of Wisdom and Folly to consist in these two Properties, (*viz.*) That *a Fool lifts up his voice with laughter, but a Wise man does scarce smile a little*, Eccluf. 21.

There is indeed a near Relation between Seriousness

neſs and Wiſdom, and one is the moſt excellent Friend to the other. A Man of a ſerious, ſedate, and conſiderate Temper, as he is always in a ready diſpoſition for Meditation (the beſt improvement both of Knowledg and Manners) ſo he Thinks without diſturbance, enters not upon another Notion till he is Maſter of the Firſt; and ſo makes *clean work* of it. Whereas a Man of a looſe, volatile and ſhatter'd Humour, thinks only by Fits and Starts, now and then in a *Morning Interval*, when the ſerious Mood comes upon him; and even then too, let but the leaſt trifle croſs his way, and his deſultorious Fancy preſently takes the *Scent*, leaves the unfiniſh'd and *half-mangled* Notion, and skips away in purſuit of the new *Game*. So that altho he *Conceives* often, yet by ſome Change or other he always *miſcarries*; and the Iſſue proves *Abortive*.

Indeed nothing excellent can be done without Seriouſneſs, and he that *courts* Wiſdom muſt be in *earneſt*. St. *James*, cap. 1. 7. aſſures us, that 'tis to no purpoſe for a *wavering* and *unſtable* Man to *Pray*, becauſe he ſhall be ſure not to *ſpeed*. And as 'tis in vain for ſuch a one to *Pray*, ſo is it in vain for him to *Study*. For a Man to pretend to work out a neat Scheme of Thoughts with a magotty unſettled Head, is as ridiculous and non-ſenſical, as to think to write *ſtreight* in a jumbling Coach, as to draw an exact Picture with a *Palſie* Hand. No, he that will *hit* what he *aims* at, muſt have a ſteddy Hand, as well as a quick Eye; and he that will Think to any *purpoſe*, muſt have fix'dneſs and compoſedneſs of Humour, as well as ſmartneſs of Parts.

And accordingly we find, that thoſe among the Phi-

Philoſophic Sects, that profeſs'd more than ordinary Eminency in Wiſdom or Virtue, aſſumed alſo a peculiar gravity of Habit, and ſolemnity of Behaviour; and the moſt ſacred and myſterious Rites of Religion were uſually perform'd with *ſilence*; and that not only for *Decency*, but for *Advantage*. Thus the *Italians*, who are the graveſt, are alſo the moſt ingenious People under Heaven; and 'tis a known Obſervation of *Ariſtotle*'s concerning *Malancholy*, that it furthers Contemplation, and makes great Wits. Thus again, the *Diſcipline* of *Silence* was a conſiderable part of the *Pythagoric* Inſtitution: And we have it ſtoried of our Bleſſed Lord himſelf, who was the *Wiſdom* of his Father, that he never *Laugh'd*.

for Poetry Muſick &c Painting &c

But becauſe a ſolemn Deportment may ſometimes diſguiſe an unthinking Mind, and *Grave* in ſome Men's Dictionaries, ſignifies the ſame as *Dull*, I ſhall put the Character a little more home, and define more cloſely wherein the true Idea of Seriouſneſs conſiſts; or what it is to be in good earneſt, a *ſerious Man*.

And Firſt, I ſhall remove it from the neighborhood of thoſe Things, which by their ſymbolizing with it in outward appearance, prove oftentimes the occaſion of Miſtake and Confuſion. It does not therefore conſiſt in the Moroſity of a *Cynic*, nor in the Feverity of an *Aſcetic*, nor in the Demureneſs of a *Preciſian*, nor in the Deadneſs and Sullenneſs of a *Quaker*, nor in the ſolemn Mien of an *Italian*, nor in the ſlow Pace of a *Spaniard*: 'Tis neither in a drooping Head, nor a mortify'd Face, nor a Primitive Beard.

'Tis ſomething very different, and much more

Excellent

Excellent than all this, that must make up a serious Man. And I believe I shall not misrepresent him, if I say, he is one that duly and impartially weighs the moments of Things, so as neither to value Trifles, nor despise Things really Excellent: That dwells much at *home*, and studies to know himself as well as Books or Men: 'That considers why 'he came into the World, how great his business, 'and how short his stay in it, how uncertain 'tis 'when he shall leave it; and whither a sinner shall 'then betake himself, when both Heaven and Earth 'shall fly from the presence of the Judg, Rev. 20. 'That considers God as always present, and the 'Folly of doing what must be repented of, and of 'going to *Hell* when a man *may* go to *Heaven*. In 'one word, That knows how to distinguish be-'tween a Moment and Eternity.

This is to be truly *serious*; and however the Pretender to gaiety and lightsomness of Humour may miscall and ridicule it by the Names of Melancholy, Dullness and Stupidity, *&c.* He that is thus affected cannot miss of being Wise and Good here, and Happy hereafter. And then 'twill be *his* turn to *Laugh*, when the others shall *Mourn* and *Weep*.

Of the slightness of all Secular, and the importance of minding our Eternal Interest.

IDleness and Impertinence, a doing of *nothing*, or of *nothing* to the *purpose*, are always signs of a vain, loose, and inconsiderate Spirit; but they are never

never *more* so, than where there is some very momentous and weighty Business to be done. The Man that Sleeps away his happy *Retirements*, or with the *Roman* Emperor, spends them in killing Flies, betrays a great deal of Weakness and Incogitancy; but should he do the same at the *Bar*, when he's to plead for his *Life*, he would certainly be thought a mere *Changeling* or Mad-man.

And yet this I fear will prove the Case of the most of those who stile themselves *Rational*. For besides that, the generality of Men live at random, without any aim or design at all; and those that propose some Ends, seldom take up with any that are Important and Material; or if they do, they seldom proportion their *Care* to the *Weight* of Things, but are serious in Trifles, and trifling in things Serious: I say, besides all this, there is nothing relating purely to *this* World that can deserve the Name of *Business*, or be worth the serious Thoughts of him who has an immortal Soul; and a Salvation to work out with *fear* and *trembling*. The greatest secular Affairs and Interest, are but *Specious Trifles*; and all our Designs and Employments about 'em *Excentrical* Motions, and Solemn Impertinencies.

And yet this is made the *Center* of all our Studies and Endeavours; the great *Bent* of the World points this way: Hence are taken the Measures of *Wisdom* and *Prudence*; and Religion it self is forced to truckle to worldly Policy. Whereas in the mean time, there is an *Affair* of grand Importance, and wherein all Mankind are deeply concern'd; and such as really deserves all that Care and Solicitude which we lavish away upon other Things, and infinitely

finitely more (tho perhaps it might be ſecured with *leſs*) and yet this is the Thing which by *Many* is utterly *neglected*, by the *Moſt* is *leaſt* cared for; and by None ſufficiently regarded. So that conſidering the general Practice of the World, I think there are very few in it to whom that will not be a very proper and ſeaſonable Admonition, which our Bleſſed Lord gave to his ſolicitous and overbuſie Diſciple, *Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many Things, but one Thing is needful.*

To Cure therefore (if poſſible) this great Folly, I have two Propoſitions to offer; *Firſt*, That no Intereſt relating purely to this preſent World, is of any great Moment or Concern to Man. *Secondly*, That to be very careful of our final Intereſt, and to make ſure to our ſelves a happy Eternity, is indeed a Thing of vaſt Moment and Importance.

The firſt of theſe I know, will ſeem very ſtrange and paradoxical to one that takes a Proſpect of Mankind, and Contemplates the great ſtir and hurry of the World, the Plottings of Stateſmen, the Emulations of Courtiers, and the Ambition of Princes; how buſie Men are in their ſeveral Concerns; what variety of Deſigns are on foot; with what *trembling* Eagerneſs they are proſecuted, and what Grief attends our Diſappointments. Sure after ſuch a *Scene* as this, one would be tempted to Think, that there muſt be ſomething very *conſiderable* in Human Life, and that Men had *notable* Intereſts here at ſtake, it being a Reproach to Human Nature, that the World ſhould ſo generally Combine to make ſuch a do about Nothing.

But

But yet *this is their Folly*; Not to inſiſt upon 'that univerſal Vanity which the Wiſe and great 'Trier of the World has charged upon it, that *Hope 'defer'd maketh the Heart ſick*, Prov. 13. and yet 'Fruition does not Cure it: That we are diſappoint-'ted in our Enjoyments as well as in our Loſſes; 'and yet that 'tis our hard Fate, to Weep at the 'Funeral of our departed Pleaſures, tho we were lit-'tle the Happier for them when we had them; That 'our greateſt Pleaſures are moſt Tranſient; and 'great Mirth always ends in Heavineſs and Demiſ-'ſion of Spirit; That the more we *Love* or *Enjoy*, 'the more we *venture*, and put our ſelves further 'within the reach of Fortune; That the greateſt 'Men are not always the moſt contented; and 'that they who are moſt *envy'd* by *others*, think 'themſelves more fit for their *Pity*: Not to inſiſt I ſay on theſe, or the like Conſiderations, I ſhall fix only upon one; whereby I think 'twill plainly ap-pear, That there *can* be no Intereſt relating purely to this World, that is of any great Moment or Con-cern to Man. And that is, the *ſhortneſs* and *uncer-tainty* of our Abode here.

The Life of Man in the *Book* of *Wiſdom*, is com-pared to a *Shadow*. Now beſides that the reſem-blance holds in many conſiderable Reſpects, as in that it is partly Life and partly Death, as the other is partly Light and partly Darkneſs; in that like a Shadow, where-ever it paſſes it leaves no *Track* be-hind it; in that it ſeems to be ſomething when in-deed it is nothing; in that 'tis always altering, and ends on a ſuddain; and when at its full Height and Prime, is often neareſt to *Declenſion*, as a Shadow

is

is to disappear when at full Length. There is yet another Instance of Resemblance, which has a more particular aptness to our present Purpose. The Shadow can continue no longer at the *utmost*, than the Light of the Sun keeps its Residence above the *Horizontal* Line, which is but a little Portion of Time; but it may fall much short of that Period by the interposition of a Cloud; and when that may be, is as uncertain as the *Weather*; and depends upon a Thousand Accidents.

And thus 'tis with our *Lives*. No Man can lengthen out his Days beyond that *natural Term* which is set him by the Temperament of the first *Qualities*; which yet are of such jarring and *unsociable* Natures, that they can't dwell long together in a *vital* Amity. But then how far, and how many ways he may fall short of that Compass, depends upon so many hidden Causes, and so many little Accidents, that it may be reckon'd among the greatest of Uncertainties. So that there is nothing in all Human Life so frail and uncertain, as *Life* it *self*.

A Consideration sufficient to depretiate and vilifie all the Entertainments and Interests of the *Animal* Life; and to call off our Care from the Objects of secular Happiness, tho there were no other Vanity in them. For were they never so good and solid in *themselves*, yet the Foundation on which they stand is so Weak and Rotten, that 'tis dangerous leaning *hard* upon them. They would be even upon this supposition, like *Nebuchadnezzars* Statue, made up indeed of *rich Metal*, but founded upon *feet* of *Clay*. And upon this account they are to be esteem'd as Vile and Contemptible as they are Ruinous.

This

This is a Consideration indeed that has but little effect in the World, and the Reason is, because few give any serious Heed and Attention to it. They know it indeed *Habitually*, and must confess it if put to the *Question*, but it lies *Dormant* in 'em, and they seldom Actually attend to it. And therefore 'tis that the Voice bids the Prophet *Isaiah*, *Cry* and *Proclaim* it *aloud*, that *all Flesh is Grass, and all the Goodliness thereof is the Flower of the Field*. He is bid to Cry *aloud*, thereby intimating both the *importance* of the *Thing*, and the general *Stupidity* of Men in not considering it.

But if Men would but often and seriously Meditate upon the shortness and uncertainty of Life, I perswade my self they would not set their Hearts much upon any Thing in it, but would look upon all its Pleasures, Honours and Profits, with the same Indifferency that the *hasty Traveller* does upon the specious Fields and Meadows which he passes by. For to what purpose I pray, should Man who holds his *Tenement* here by such a short and unstable *Tenure*, that can't Live long, and *may* Dye presently, be so Busie and Thoughtful about worldly Concerns? The ancient *Patriarchs*, tho their Span was so very much longer than ours, thought it hardly worth while to Build Houses, but contented themselves to grow *gray* in *Tents*; and what do we mean, who in Comparison to them are but Ἐφήμεροι (as *Pindar* calls us) people for a *Day*, by plunging our selves so deeply into Care and Trouble? Is there any Thing among the Actions of either Brutes or Mad-men, so silly and irrational as this?

But

But to be a little particular, to what purpoſe ſhould Man who walketh in a *vain Shadow*, *diſquiet* himſelf alſo thus in *vain*, and be ſo greedy in heaping up Riches when he can't tell who ſhall gather them? To what purpoſe ſhould a Man trouble both the World's and his own Reſt to make himſelf *great*? For beſides the emptineſs of the Thing, the *Play* will quickly be done, and the *Actors* muſt all retire into a ſtate of *Equality*, and then it matters not who Perſonated the *Emperor*, or who the *Slave*. To what purpoſe ſhould a Man be very earneſt in the purſuit of *Fame*? He muſt ſhortly Dye, and ſo muſt thoſe too who admire him. Nay I could almoſt ſay, to what purpoſe ſhould a Man lay himſelf out upon *Study*, and Drudge ſo laborioufly in the *Mines* of Learning? He's no ſooner a little wiſer than his Brethren, but Death thinks him *ripe* for his *Sickle*, and for ought we know, after all his Pains and Induſtry, in the next World an Ideot or a Mechanic will be as *forward* as he. To what purpoſe, laſtly, does a Tyrant oppreſs his People, tranſgreſs thoſe Bounds which *wiſe* Nature has ſet him, invade his Neighbor's Countries, deprive the Innocent and Peaceable of their Liberty, ſack Cities, plunder Provinces, depopulate Kingdoms, and almoſt put the Foundations of the Earth out of Courſe; to what purpoſe is all this? *Thou Fool* ſays our Bleſſed Saviour, *this Night thy Soul ſhall be required of thee; and then whoſe ſhall thoſe Things be which thou haſt provided?*

There is certainly nothing in all *Nature* ſo ſtrange and unaccountable as the *Actions* of ſome Men. *They ſee*, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *that wiſe Men alſo*

Dye

Dye and Periſh together as well as the Ignorant and Fooliſh, and leave their Riches for others, and yet they think (at leaſt Act as if they did) *that their Houſes ſhall continue for ever, and that their dwelling Places ſhall endure from one Generation to another, and call their Lands after their own Names.*

This they think is their *Wiſdom*, but the Pſalmiſt aſſures them 'tis their *Fooliſhneſs*, and ſuch a Fooliſhneſs too as makes them comparable to the *Beaſts that periſh*, however their *Poſterity* may *praiſe their ſaying*. And certainly the Learned Apoſtle was of the ſame Mind, when from this Principle, *The time is ſhort*; he deduces the very ſame Concluſion we have hitherto pleaded for, that we ſhould be very Indifferent and Unconcern'd about any worldly *Good* or *Evil*, *That they that have Wives ſhould be as tho they had none*; *and they that Weep as tho they Wept not*; *they that Rejoyce as tho they Rejoyced not*; *they that Buy as tho they Poſſeſt not*; *and they that uſe this World as not abuſing it, for the Faſhion of this World paſſes away.* It does ſo, and for that Reaſon there is nothing in this Life to be very much *Lov'd*, or very much *Fear'd*; eſpecially if we conſider what a grand Intereſt we have all of us at Stake in the *other* World. For as 'tis with the *Sufferings*, ſo is it with the *Enjoyments* of this preſent Time, they are neither of them *worthy to be compared with the Glory that ſhall be revealed.*

We have ſeen how frivolous and unconcerning the greateſt Affairs of this World are, how unworthy to be made the Objects of our *Solicitude*, much more to be the *Buſineſs* of our Lives; we have weigh'd them in the *Ballance*, and they are found *wanting*.

But Man is a Creature of brisk and active Faculties, and is there no Employment for him? Yes, As God has furniſh'd him with Powers, ſo alſo has he aſſign'd him a Work; and ſuch a one too as is to be perform'd with *Fear* and *Trembling*. There is a good Fight to be Fought, there is a whole Body of Sin to be deſtroy'd, there are Paſſions to be mortify'd, Habits to be unlearnt, Affections to be purify'd, Virtues and Holy Diſpoſitions to be acquired, Acts of Virtue to be oppoſed againſt Acts of Sin, and Habits againſt Habits: In a word, there is a Heaven to be obtain'd, and a Hell to be avoided. This indeed is a great Work, and of great Concernment to be done, and ſuch as calls for our principal, (I could almoſt ſay our whole) Care and Diligence. The great neceſſity of which, for more Diſtinctneſs ſake, I ſhall repreſent in a few Conſiderations.

And *Firſt*, It highly concerns us to be very careful concerning our final Intereſt, becauſe of the vaſt, the infinite Moment of the Thing. For certainly it can be no leſs, than whether a Man ſhall be *Damn'd* or *Saved*, *eternally* Happy, or *eternally* Miſerable. No Man certainly that thinks at all, can think this an *indifferent* Matter; or if he does, he will one Day be ſadly convinc'd of the contrary, when he ſhall Curſe the Day of his Birth, and wiſh for the *Mercy* of Annihilation. The loweſt Conception we can frame of the Condition of the Damn'd, is an utter Excluſion from the Beatific Preſence of God. And tho the Non-enjoyment of this be no great Puniſhment to ſenſual Men in this State and Region of Exile, who perhaps would be content that God ſhould keep Heaven to him-

himſelf, ſo he would let them have the free uſe of the *Earth*; yet hereafter, when the Powers of their Souls ſhall be awaken'd to their full Vigour and Activity, when they ſhall have a lively and thorough Apprehenſion of true Happineſs, and of the infinite Beauties of the Supreme Good, there will ariſe ſuch a vehement *Thirſt*, ſuch an intenſe Longing in the Soul, as will infinitely exceed the moſt exalted Languiſhments of *Love*, the higheſt Droughts of a *Fever*. The Soul will then point to the *Center* of Happineſs with her full Bent and *Verticity*, which yet ſhe ſhall find utterly out of her Reach; and ſo full of *Deſire*, and full of *Deſpair*, ſhe ſhall Lament both her *Folly* and her *Miſery* to Eternal Ages. And who is able to dwell even with theſe Everlaſting Burnings?

But *Secondly*, As an Argument for our great Care, we may conſider, That as the Intereſt is great, ſo a more than ordinary Care is neceſſary to ſecure it. And that upon ſeveral Accounts. 1. Becauſe our Redemption by Chriſt is not our immediate and actual diſcharge from Sin, (as the *Antinomians* would have it) but only an inſtating us into a *Capacity* of Pardon and Reconciliation, which is to be *actually* obtain'd by the Performance of *Conditions*; without which we ſhall be ſo far from being the Better for what has been done and ſuffer'd for us, that our Condemnation will be ſo much the Heavier, for neglecting to *finiſh* ſo great Salvation.

2. Becauſe the Conditions of our Salvation, tho temper'd with much Mercy and Accommodation to Human Infirmity, are yet ſo difficult, as to engage us to put forth our whole Might to the Work. A great part of Chriſtianity is very harſh to Fleſh

and Blood; however to the *Habituated* Diſcipline, Chriſt's *Yoke* may be *eaſie*, and his *Burthen light*. And accordingly, the Path that leads to Life is call'd *narrow*; and the Gate (tho open'd by our Saviour) is yet ſo *ſtrait*, that we are bid to *ſtrive* to Enter in at it. And *the Righteous ſcarcely are ſav'd*.

Again, becauſe there is a ſtrong Confederacy againſt us among the Powers of Darkneſs. We have a very potent and malicious Enemy, who envies Man ſhould arrive to thoſe happy Manſions from whence himſelf *by Tranſgreſſion fell*; And accordingly, there is a great Woe pronounc'd by the Angel againſt the Inhabitants of the Earth, becauſe the Devil is come down among them, having great Wrath. And this is made by the Apoſtle himſelf an Argument for more than ordinary Care and Circumſpection: *Be ſober*, ſays he, *be vigilant, becauſe your Adverſary the Devil, walks about as a roaring Lion, ſeeking whom he may devour*.

Again, Becauſe we have but a little Time for this our great Work; and that too very precarious and uncertain. Our *Glaſs* holds but very little *Sand*, tho 'twere to be all ſpent, and drawn out in the *Running*. But there are alſo ſeveral accidental Impediments that may *intercept* its Paſſage: And therefore as this was alledg'd as an Argument for *Indifferency* about the Things of this World, ſo for the ſame reaſon, it concerns us to be eminently careful in the grand Buſineſs of the *Next*. He that duly conſiders how many perſons Dye ſuddainly, how many more may, and that none can Engage for it that he himſelf ſhall not, muſt needs confeſs himſelf extremely concern'd to improve this ſhort,

this

this *uncertain* Opportunity, this *only* Time of Probation; and to work with all his Might while 'tis *Day*, before the *Night come, when no Man can Work.*

Laſtly, It concerns us to uſe a more than ordinary Care and Diligence in ſecuring this our great Intereſt; becauſe after all our Care and Vigilancy, all our Strictneſſes and Severities, we don't know the juſt and preciſe Meaſures of *Qualification*; and how much *Trimming* of our *Lamps* is requiſite, to fit 'em for the *Sanctuary* of God. For tho we are well aſſured in *general*, from the Terms of the Evangelical Covenant, that if we *Repent* we ſhall be *forgiven*, yet there is a great Latitude in Repentance; and what Degree in ſome Caſes will be available, is a Secret God has kept to himſelf. For we don't know the full heinouſneſs of our Sins, nor how far God was provoked by 'em; nor conſequently, by what degrees of Sorrow and Amendment he will be appeas'd. And 'tis moſt certain there is a mighty difference. To *Simon Magus* 'twas almoſt a deſperate Caſe: *If peradventure the thoughts of thy Heart may be forgiven thee*, Act. 8. 22. And ſome are ſaid to be ſav'd with *fear*, and as it were pull'd out of the *fire*. And we know what the great Apoſtle has ſaid, *I know nothing by my ſelf, yet I am not thereby juſtify'd.* All which argues a great Latitude and Variety, even in *neceſſary* Preparation; and how to ſtate the matter *exactly* we don't know; and therefore as far as we are able, ſhould be ſure to do enough; for we may eaſily do too little; and can never do too much in a Matter of ſuch high Importance.

From all which I conclude, *First*, That thoſe who withdraw themſelves (as far as is conſiſtent with Charity and the proſecution of the Public Good) from the noiſe, hurry and buſineſs of the World, that they may apply themſelves more ſerenely and entirely to a Life of Devotion and Religion, and more freely and undiſtractedly Attend upon the grand Concern of another World; act very *wiſely* and *prudently*. For this is *Wiſdom*, to take a right Eſtimate of Things; to proportion our Care to their Value; and to mind that moſt, which is moſt concerning. This is what the Apoſtle commends, *to lay aſide every weight*, that we may be the ſurer to win the great *Prize*, and *ſo to run as to obtain*. This laſtly, is the very Part which *Mary* choſe; and which our Lord aſſures us, ſhall *never be taken away from her*.

Again I conclude, That all thoſe who are either wholly negligent of this their grand Intereſt, or that do not principally regard it; and as our Saviour ſpeaks, in the firſt place *ſeek the Kingdom of God*; that are more intent upon this World than the next; that will venture to play the Knave for a little *Preferment*; that make uſe of Religion as an Inſtrument for ſecular Deſigns: In one word, That in any kind forfeit their great Intereſt in the other World, for a little in this, are the greateſt *Fools* in Nature. This Meaſure I confeſs, will take in a great many; and ſome perhaps, who would think it a great Affront to be reckon'd of the Number. But it can't be help'd, the Charge is moſt unqueſtionably True; and they themſelves, however conceited of their Wit and Parts now, will once be of the

the ſame Opinion, when they ſhall ſay, *We Fools thought his Life madneſs.*

God grant we may all ſo number our Days, and ſo compare our two Intereſts, as to apply our Hearts to greater Wiſdom.

A Metaphyſical Eſſay toward the Demonſtration of a God, from the Steddy and Immutable Nature of Truth.

Sect. I.

How difficult a thing 'tis to demonſtrate a God by any new Medium; and how far the preſent Eſſay may pretend to do ſo.

1. IT has been the curious Employment of ſo many and ſo excellent Pens to demonſtrate the Exiſtence of a God; and this they have done with ſuch variety of Argument, Moral, Phyſical and Metaphyſical, that however eaſie it may be to contrive new *Poſtures*, and Ring other Changes upon the ſame Bells, 'tis yet almoſt as difficult to find out an Argument for the Proof of a God that has not been uſed already, as to reſiſt the Cogency of thoſe that have. So that here if any where, that of *Solomon* is more than ordinary verify'd, *The thing that has been it is that which ſhall be; and that which is done, is that which ſhall be done; and there is no new thing under the Sun*, Eccleſ. 1. 9.

2. The neweſt indeed that has of late Years appear'd to the World, is that of the celebrated *Deſ-Cartes*, taken from the Idea of God, conſider'd both abſolutely in its ſelf, as including all kinds and de-

degrees of Perfection; and conſequently, Exiſtence; and as 'tis ſubjected in the Mind of Man, which (as he contends) could never have had ſuch an Idea, were there not ſomething which had all that Perfection in it *Formally* or Eminently, which is in the Idea *objectively*.

3. Now tho this Procedure of his be extraordinarily Fine and Subtile, and ſuch as (to the firſt part at leaſt) will appear no leſs ſtrong and concluding to any capable and indifferent Perſon, that conſiders it as 'tis managed at large by its ingenious Author, yet this was not a Notion newly excogitated, but only revived by him. For *Aquinas* had before lighted upon the former, and refuſed it; and he is beholding to St. *Auſtin*, and the School of the *Platoniſts*, for the later.

4. I ſpeak not this to diminiſh one *Ray* from the *Glory* of that incomparable Speculatiſt. That which I remark here, is not the Barrenneſs of his *Invention*, but that of the *exhauſted Subject*. The Matter had been ſqueezed before to the laſt Drop; and his only Fault was, that he was not *Born ſooner*. Which might be a ſufficient Apology, if this Procedure of mine prove not entirely New and *Unblown* upon. Whether it be or no, 'tis not poſſible (without examining all the Books in the World) abſolutely to determine. This much I believe I may venture to ſay, That 'tis no where univerſally receiv'd, nor by any that I know of, induſtriouſly and profeſſedly managed; And that Laſtly, 'Tis as New as the Matter will now afford; and conſequently, as any Man in Reaſon ought to expect.

SECT.

Sect. II.

The various Acceptations of Truth; and which that is, which is made the ground of the preſent Demonſtration.

1. HAving undertaken to demonſtrate the Exiſtence of God from the ſteddy and immutable Nature of *Truth*, I am firſt to diſtinguiſh the *Equivocalneſs* or Latitude of the Word, and then to point out to that determinate Part, which I intend for the Ground of my *Demonſtration*.

2. The moſt general Partition of Truth, is into *Truth of the Thing*, and *Truth of the Underſtanding*; or (according to the language of the Schools) Truth of the *Object*, and Truth of the *Subject*. Both of theſe again, have a double *ſubdiviſion*. For by Truth of the Object, may be underſtood either that *Tranſcendental* Verity which is convertible with *Ens*, and runs through the whole *Circle* of Being, whereby every Thing is really what it is; which is *Simple* Truth. Or elſe, certain Relations and Habitudes of Things one towards another, whether Affirmatively or Nagatively; which is *Complex* Truth.

3. And ſo again, by Truth of the *Subject* may be underſtood either a due Conformity between the *Underſtanding* and the *Object*, when I compound what is compounded, and divide what is divided; which is *Logical* Truth. Or elſe a due Conformity between the *Words* and the *Underſtanding*, when I ſpeak as I think; which is *Moral* Truth or *Veracity*.

4. Now

4. Now the Truth, upon whose immutable Nature I build the Demonstration of a God, is not that of the *Subject*, but that of the *Object*. Nor that neither according to its *simple* and *transcendental* Acceptation, but as it signifies certain immutable Relations and Habitudes of Things one towards another by way of Affirmation and Negation; which is *Truth* of the *Object Complex*.

Sect. III.

That there are such Relations and Habitudes of Things toward one another; and that they are Steddy and Immutable.

1. TWo Things are here asserted, First, That there are Relations and Habitudes of Things towards one another: And 2*dly*, That they are Steddy and Immutable. First, I say, there are certain Relations and Habitudes betwixt Thing and Thing. Thus there is a certain Habitude between some *Premises*, and some *Conclusions*; for any Thing will not follow from any Thing; between some *Objects* and some *Faculties*; between some *Ends* and some *Means*; between some *Subjects*, and some *Predicates*; and the like.

2. This is as true, as that there is any such thing as *Truth*. For Truth is nothing else, but the Composition or Division of Idea's, according to their respective Habitudes and Relations. And without *Truth*, there can be no such Thing as *Knowledg*; for Konwledg is *Truth of the Subject*; 'Tis a Man's thinking

thinking of Things as they are; and that ſuppoſes Truth of the *Object*. Which whoſoever denies, contradicts himſelf, and eſtabliſhes the Propoſition which he deſign'd to overthrow; and conſequently, *univerſal* Scepticiſm is the very extremity of Nonſenſe and Inconſiſtency.

3. And as there are certain Habitudes and Relations between Things; ſo 2*ly*, ſome of them are Steddy and Immutable, that never were *made* by any Underſtanding or Will, nor can ever be *unmade* or null'd by them; but have a fixt and unalterable σχέσις, from Everlaſting to Everlaſting. And conſequently, there are not only *Truths*, but *Eternal* Truths.

4. As firſt in *general*, 'Tis a Propoſition of neceſſary and Eternal Truth, That there muſt be ever ſuch a thing as *Truth*; or that *ſomething* muſt be *True*; for let it be affirm'd or denyed, Truth thruſts in upon us either way. And ſo 2*ly*, There are many *particular* Propoſitions of eternal and unchangeable Verity; as in *Logic*, That the Cauſe is always before the Effect in order of Nature; in *Phyſics*, That all local motion is by Succeſſion; in *Metaphyſics*, That nothing can be, and not be, at once; in *Mathematics*, That all right Angles are equal; that thoſe Lines which are parallel to the ſame Right Line, are alſo parallel to each other, *&c.* Theſe and ſuch like are ſtanding and *irrepealable* Truths, ſuch as have no precarious Exiſtence, or arbitrarious Dependance upon any Will or Underſtanding whatſoever; and ſuch as all Intellectual Operations do not *make*, but *ſuppoſe*; it being as much againſt the Nature of Underſtanding, to make

make that Truth which it ſpeculates, as 'tis againſt the Nature of the Eye, to Create that Light by which it ſees; or of an Image, to make that Object which it *repreſents*.

Sect. IV.

That ſince there are Eternal and Immutable Verities or Habitudes of Things, the ſimple Eſſences of Things muſt be alſo Eternal and Immutable.

1. HAving gain'd this Point, That there are Eternal and Immutable Verities or Habitudes of Things, the next will be, that upon this Poſtulatum it neceſſarily follows, That the *Simple Eſſences* of Things muſt be alſo Eternal and Immutable. For as there can be no Truth of the *Subject*, without Truth of the *Object* to which it may be Conformable, (as was before obſerv'd) ſo neither can there be Truth of the Object *Complex*, without Truth of the Object *Simple*.

2. This will appear undeniably true to any one that attends to the Idea of *Objective Truth Complex*; which is nothing elſe, but certain Habitudes of Reſpects betwixt Thing and Thing, as to Compoſition or Diviſion. For how can there be any ſuch *Habitudes* or *Relations*, without the *Simple Eſſences* themſelves from which they *reſult*? As for inſtance, How can any Mathematical Propoſition, ſuppoſe that of *Euclid*, that if two Circles touch one another inwardly, they have not the ſame common Center, have this Habitude, unleſs

leſs there be two ſuch diſtinct Simple Eſſences, as *Circle* and *Center*? Theſe Habitudes can no more ſubſiſt by themſelves, than any other *Relations* can; they muſt have their *Simple Eſſences*, as the other have their *Subject* and *Term*; upon the Poſition of which, they immediately *reſult*.

3. If therefore there can be no Truth of the Object *Complex*, without Truth of the Object *Simple*; and there can be no Habitudes and Relations of Compoſition and Diviſion, without the ſimple Eſſences themſelves, it follows, That whenſoever the one does Exiſt, the other muſt Exiſt alſo; and conſequently, if the one be Eternal, the other muſt be Eternal alſo; and ſo (to recur to the former Inſtance) if it be a Propoſition of Eternal Truth, that if two Circles touch one another inwardly, they have not the ſame Common Center, the two diſtinct Simple Eſſences of *Circle* and *Center*, muſt be from Eternity alſo; and conſequently, the Simple Eſſences, of Things are Eternal and Immutable; which was the Point to be *here* demonſtrated.

Sect. V.

That the Simple Eſſences of Things being not Eternal in their Natural Subſiſtences, muſt be ſo in their Ideal Subſiſtences or Realities.

1. From the Eternity of Eſſential Habitudes, we have demonſtrated the neceſſity, that the Simple Eſſences of Things ſhould be Eternal. And now, ſince they are not Eternal (as is too plain to need

need Proof) in their *natural* Subſiſtences, it follows, that they muſt be Eternal in their *Ideal* Subſiſtences or Realities.

2. For there are but two conceivable Ways how any Thing may Exiſt; either *out* of all Underſtanding, or *within* ſome Underſtanding. If therefore the Simple Eſſences of Things are Eternal, but not *out* of all Underſtanding, it remains, they muſt have an Eternal Exiſtence *in* ſome Underſtanding; or rather, they are the ſame with that Underſtanding it ſelf, conſider'd as variouſly *exhibitive* or *repreſentative*, according to the various Modes of *Imitability* or *Participation*; which is the true Notion of *Idea's*, as 'tis generally expreſs'd both by Platoniſts and School-men; and as I have more at large Explain'd it in my Letter of Idea's; to which for Brevities ſake I refer.

Sect. VI.

That there is therefore, an Eternal Mind or Underſtanding, Omniſcient, Immutable, and endow'd with all poſſible Perfection, the ſame which we call God.

1. THis evidently follows from the Concluſion of the foregoing Section; for if the Simple Eſſences of Things have a real and eternal Exiſtence in ſome Underſtanding, what Conſequence can be more Plain, than that there is a Mind or Underſtanding Eternally Exiſting? An Eſſence can no more *eternally* Exiſt in a *Temporary* Underſtanding, than a Body can be *infinitely* extended

tended in a *finite* Space. The Mind therefore wherein it does Exiſt, muſt be Eternal; there is therefore in the firſt place, an *Eternal* Mind.

2. 'Twill follow alſo in the next place, that this Mind is *Omniſcient* as well as Eternal. For that Mind which is Eternally Fraught with the *Simple Eſſences* of Things, muſt needs contain alſo in it ſelf all the ſeveral *Habitudes* and *Reſpects* of them; theſe neceſſarily ariſing from the other by way of *Natural Reſult*. For as before, the Argument was good from the Habitudes of Things to their Simple Eſſences; ſo is it as good backwards, from the Simple Eſſences of Things to their Habitudes. But theſe are the ſame with *Truth*. That Mind therefore which has all *theſe*, has all *Truths*; which is the ſame as to be *Omniſcient*.

3. 'Twill follow hence alſo in the next place, That this Mind is *Immutable* as well as *Omniſcient* and *Eternal*. For if that Mind which has Exiſting in it ſelf from all Eternity, all the Simple Eſſences of Things, and conſequently, all their poſſible Scheſes or Habitudes, ſhould ever *change*, there would ariſe a new *Scheſis* in this Mind that was not before; which is contrary to the Suppoſition. 'Tis impoſſible therefore, that this Mind ſhould ever undergo any Mutation; eſpecially if theſe Eternal Idea's and Habitudes be one and the ſame with this Mind, as I have already *hinted*, and elſewhere proved.

See my Letter of Idea's.

4. Laſtly, 'Twill follow, that this Mind is not only *Eternal*, *Immutable* and *Omniſcient*, but that in a word, 'tis endow'd with all *poſſible* Perfection. For to *have*, and it ſelf to be all the Eſſences and Habitudes

Habitudes of Things, is to *have* and to *be* all that can *poſſibly* be; to be the *Rule* and *Meaſure* of all Perfection; to be Supreme in the *Scale* of Being; and to be the *Root* and Spring of all *Entity*; which is the ſame as to be *God*. This *Mind* therefore ſo accompliſh'd, is no other than *God*; and conſequently *there is a God*; which was the Thing I undertook to *Demonſtrate*.

POSTSCRIPT.

THis *Eſſay* has lain by me a conſiderable Time, and I have lately review'd it with all the *Coldneſs* and *Indifferency* of a *Stranger*; and with more *ſeverity* perhaps than I am like to meet with from the moſt *Prejudiced Reader*. I have *turn'd* it, and *view'd* it on all ſides; and, after the moſt deliberate and impartial Scrutiny that I could make, I muſt needs own, that I am not Conſcious of the leaſt *Flaw* in the whole Procedure.

I know but of one Place that is liable to any *reaſonable* Exception; and that is in the Fourth Section. The Propoſition there maintain'd is this, That *ſince there are Eternal and Immutable Verities or Habitudes of Things, the Simple Eſſences of Things muſt be alſo Eternal and Immutable.* Here it may be objected, That theſe Habitudes are not attributed *abſolutely* to the Simple Eſſences as *actually* exiſting, but only *Hypothetically*, that whenſoever they *ſhall* Exiſt, they ſhall alſo carry ſuch *Relations* to one another. There is you'll ſay only an Hypothetical Connexion between the *Subject* and the *Predicate*, not an abſolute *Poſition* of either.

But in anſwer to this, I ſay firſt, That theſe Habitudes are not (as is ſuppoſed) only by way of *Hypotheſis*, but *abſolutely* attributed to the ſimple Eſſences as *actually* Exiſting. For when I ſay, for inſtance, That every part of a Circle is equally diſtant from the Center; this Propoſition does not hang in *ſuſpence*, then to be verify'd when the Things ſhall Exiſt in *Nature*, but is at *preſent actually* True, as True as it ever *will* or *can* be; and conſequently, I may thence infer, that the Things themſelves *already* are. There is no neceſſity I confeſs, they ſhould Exiſt in *Nature*, (which is all that the Objection proves) but *Exiſt* they muſt. For of *Nothing* there can be no *Affections*.

But *2ly*, Suppoſe I grant what the Objector would have, That theſe Habitudes are not *abſolutely* attributed to the Simple Eſſences but only by way of *Hypotheſis*; yet I don't ſee what he can gain by this Conceſſion, For thus much at leaſt, is attributed to the Simple Eſſences at *preſent*, that whenſoever they *ſhall* Exiſt, ſuch and ſuch Habitudes will attend them. I ſay thus much is attributed *actually*, and at *preſent*: But now how can any thing be ſaid of that which is not? There is therefore another way of Exiſting beſides that *in rerum Natura*; namely, in the *Mundus Archetypus*, or the *Ideal World*; where all the *Rationes rerum*, or Simple Eſſences of Things, whereof there are ſtanding and immutable Affirmations and Negations, have an Eternal and Immutable Exiſtence, before ever they enter upon the *Stage* of *Nature*.

Nor ought this *Ideal* way of ſubſiſting to ſeem ſtrange, when even while Things have a *Natural* ſub-

Subſiſtence, the Propoſitions concerning them are not verify'd according to their *Natural*, but according to their *Ideal* Subſiſtences. Thus we demonſtrate ſeveral Propoſitions concerning a right Line, a Circle, *&c.* and yet 'tis moſt certain, that none of theſe are to be found in Nature according to that *Exactneſs* ſuppoſed in the *Demonſtration*. Such and ſuch Attributes therefore belong to them, not as they are in *Nature*, but as they are in their *Idea's*. This is a Notion very frequently glanc'd at by Saint *Auſtin*; and 'tis the Concluſion of *Aquinas*, that the Soul *Omnia vera cognoſcit in rationibus æternis*, Part 1. Qu. 84. Art. 5. And of late years this Notion has been much improv'd by the ingenious Philoſopher *Du Hamel*, in his Book *De Mente humana*. And if this be true in Propoſitions whoſe Subjects are in *Nature*, much more is it in *Eternal* Propoſitions, whoſe Simple Eſſences have not always a *natural* Exiſtence. Theſe can no otherwiſe be verify'd but by the *coeternal* Exiſtence of *ſimple Eſſences* in the *Ideal* World.

One thing I have more to add in the Vindication of this *Eſſay*; Whereas in the third Section it was aſſerted, That the Nature of Truth is Steddy and Immutable, and ſuch as has no precarious Exiſtence or arbitrarious Dependence upon any Underſtanding whatever; and yet in the fifth Section 'tis affirm'd, That it owes its Exiſtence to ſome Mind or other; leſt one part of this Meditation ſhould be thought to claſh againſt another, I thought it requiſite to adjuſt this ſeeming Contradiction. For the clearing of which, we muſt be beholding to that celebrated Diſtinction of the Platonic School,

of the Divine Mind into νοῦς ποιητὸς and νοῦς ποιητὸς, *Conceptive* and *Exhibitive*. Truth does by no means *depend* upon any Mind as *conceptive*, whether Human or Divine; but is *supposed* by it; which is the Sense of the third Section. But upon Mind as *Exhibitive*, it may and does *ultimately* depend; so that if there were no *God* of Eternal Mind, there could be no *Truth*; which is the Sense of the fifth Section. So that here is no Contradiction, but all Harmony and Agreement. See more of this in my Letter of Idea's.

The

The Chriſtian Law Aſſerted and Vindicated, or a general Apology for the Chriſtian Religion, both as to the *Obligativeneſs* and *Reaſonableneſs* of the Inſtitution.

1. I Deſign here to conſider Two Things concerning Chriſtianity:
1ſt, That it is a State of Service.
2ly, That it is a Reaſonable Service.
The Eviction of theſe two Propoſitions, will contain both the *Aſſertion* of a Chriſtian Law, and its *Vindication*; and be a plenary Juſtification of its Divine Author from the Imputation of two ſorts of Adverſaries; Thoſe that reflect upon his *Wiſdom*, by ſuppoſing that he requires nothing to be done by his Servants; and thoſe that reflect upon his *Goodneſs*, by ſuppoſing him a *Hard Maſter*; and that he requires unreaſonable Performances.

2. I begin therefore with the *firſt* Propoſition concerning the Chriſtian Inſtitution, That it is a *Service*. It is moſt certain, that the Chriſtian Religion, according to the Genuine Senſe and Deſign of its Divine Author, is the moſt Wiſe and Excellent Inſtitution that could poſſibly be framed, both for the *Glory* of the *Divine* Attributes, and the beſt Intereſt of *Mankind*. And *without Controverſie* (if we take it as 'tis exhibited to us in the inſpired Writings) *Great is the Myſtery of Godlineſs*, 1 Tim. 5. 16. But if we Conſult the perverſe Gloſſes and

Comments of ſome of our Chriſtian *Rabbins*, and take our Meaſures of the Chriſtian Religion from thoſe ill-favour'd Schemes and Draughts of it we meet with in *Dutch Syſtemes*; as ſome Chriſtians are the Worſt of *Men*, ſo will their Religion appear to be the Worſt of *Religions*; a ſenſeleſs and ridiculous Inſtitution; not worthy the Contrivance of a Wiſe *Politician*, much leſs of him who is the *Wiſdom of the Father*. It fares here with Chriſtianity, as with a *Picture* that is drawn at ſo many *remote* Hands, till at length it degenerates from the *Original* Truth; and wants an *under-title* to diſcover whoſe it is. And indeed, whatever Declamations are made againſt *Judaiſm* and *Paganiſm*, the worſt Enemies of the Chriſtian Religion, are ſome of thoſe that Profeſs and Teach it. For if it be in reality, as ſome (who call themſelves *Orthodox*) deſcribe it, I may boldly ſay, that 'tis neither for the Reputation of God to be the *Author* of ſuch a Religion, nor for the Intereſt of Men to be guided by it; and that as *Sin took occaſion by the Law*, Rom. 7. 11. ſo may it (and that more juſtly) by the *Goſpel* too, to deceive and ruin the World; by that Goſpel which was intended as the Inſtrument both of its Temporal and Eternal Welfare.

3. For if you look upon Chriſtianity as ſome Men are pleaſed to hold the *Proſpective*, it is no way accommodated for the Promotion of Holineſs and Virtue; but is rather a perfect Diſcharge from all Duty, and a *Character* of *Licentiouſneſs*. For among other Miſrepreſentations of the Goſpel, this is one, (and I think the moſt pernicious one that the Sophiſtry of Hell could ever ſuggeſt) That it requires

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nothing to be done by its Proſelytes. A Notion ſo ridiculous and miſchievous, as is fit for none but a profane *Epicure* to Embrace; who may be allow'd to make his *Religion* as Idle and *Sedentary*, as he does his *God*. Nay, 'tis not only ridiculous and miſchievous, but in the higheſt Meaſure *Antichriſtian*. For what greater *Antichriſtianiſm* can there be than that, which ſtrikes not only at ſome of the main Branches, but at the very Root of Chriſtianity; and at once, Evacuates the entire Purpoſe and Aim of the Goſpel?

4. But to ſet this Mark upon the right Forehead; there are Three ſorts of Men that come in ſome meaſure or other, under this Charge. The firſt are the *Antinomians*, who are Impudent and Ignorant enough in expreſs Terms to Aſſert, That the Sacrifice and Satisfaction of Chriſt, does wholly Excuſe us from all manner of Duty and Obedience; as if we *Libertines* of the Goſpel were ſo far from being bound to *Work out our Salvation with Fear and Trembling*, that we are not to work at all; and as if the Deſign of Chriſt's Coming, were only to Satisfie for the Tranſgreſſions Committed againſt the *Old* Covenant; and not at all to introduce a *New* One; and to diſcharge us from the Obligation of the *Moral*, as well as *Ceremonial* Law.

5. Nay, ſome there are among them, that carry the Buſineſs yet higher, and exclude not only the Repentance and good Works of Men, but even the Mediation of Chriſt himſelf, at leaſt the neceſſity of it, by ſuppoſing an *Anticipating* Juſtification or Pardon from all Eternity; which they found upon the Secret Decree and Counſel of God,

6. The next that have a ſhare in the forementioned Charge, are thoſe who make Chriſtianity a Matter of bare Speculation; and think all Religion abſolved in *Orthodoxy* of Opinion; that care not how Men *Live*, but only how they *Teach*; and are ſo over-intent upon the *Creed*, that they neglect the *Commandments*. Little conſidering, that *Opinion* is purely in order to *Practice*; and that Orthodoxy of Judgment is neceſſary only in ſuch Matters, where a Miſtake would be of dangerous Influence to our *Actions*, that is, in *Fundamentals*. So that the neceſſity of thinking rightly, is derived from the neceſſity of doing rightly; and conſequently, the later is the more neceſſary of the Two.

7. I am as ready to grant, as the moſt zealous Stickler for *Orthodoxy* can deſire, that our Underſtandings are under Obligation in Divine Matters; but withal, I think it abſurd that the Obligation ſhould *Terminate* there; ſince then 'twould follow, *Firſt*, That all Theological Science were merely Speculative; *Secondly*, That we are bound to exact Orthodoxy in all Speculations, (there being then no reaſon why in one, and not in another) And *Thirdly*, (Which is the greateſt Abſurdity of all) that we are obliged and tied up to no purpoſe; becauſe nothing is effected by it. Whenever therefore, we are obliged to ſoundneſs of Judgment, 'tis purely in order to the Regulation of our Practice; and conſequently, ſolitary Orthodoxy does not ſatisfie its own End, much leſs that of Chriſtianity. For to what purpoſe ſerves the *Direction* of the *Compaſs*, if there be neither Wind nor Sail to carry on the Veſſel to the Haven?

8. But

8. But there are yet another ſort of Men, who are juſtly chargable with Expunging all Duty from the Chriſtian Inſtitution; I mean the *Solifidians*, who under a Pretence of advancing the Merits of the Croſs, and the Freeneſs of the Divine Grace, requiring nothing of a Chriſtian in order to his *Juſtification* and Acceptance before God; but firmly to rely on the Satisfaction and Merits of Chriſt; and without any more ado, to apply all to himſelf. And herein they do not only contradict the *general Deſign* and *particular Expreſſes* of the Goſpel, but Treſpaſs againſt all *Logick* and Common Senſe. They contradict the *Goſpel*, in requiring nothing but Faith, whereas that (as we ſhall ſee anon) equally requires *Obedience*. And they contradict Common *Senſe* in requiring ſuch a Faith. For they put the Concluſion before the Premiſes, and make that the firſt Act of Faith, which ſuppoſes others; and in due order ought to be the laſt. And beſides, they make that Act of Faith contribute *inſtrumentally* towards the *effecting* of Juſtification, which in order of Nature is *Conſequent* to it; and ſuppoſes it already *effected*. For I muſt be firſt Juſtified, before I can rightly believe that I am ſo; otherwiſe I ſhall believe a falſe Propoſition; ſince (as the moſt Elementary Logician well knows) the certitude of the Subject does not make, but *ſuppoſe* that of the Object.

9. But I could diſpenſe with the *unphiloſophicalneſs* of this their Hypotheſis, were it not withall *Unchriſtian*, and utterly deſtructive of all Piety and Virtue. The great Miſchief is, they unty the Cords of Duty, and exclude the Neceſſity of Obedience

dience as really and effectually, tho' not ſo *formally* and expreſly, as the *Antinomians* do. For they require nothing but Faith to qualifie a Man for Pardon; and tho' afterwards for Modeſty's ſake, they come in halting with good Works, yet 'tis at ſuch a Time, when they might as well have left them out. 'Tis when the grand Buſineſs (for which alone they could be neceſſary) is over; *When the Man is Numbred among the Children of God, and his Lot is among the Saints.* And to ſay here, That good Works are neceſſary to *Salvation*, tho not to *Juſtification*, is a Myſtery above my Conception; or rather, an Abſurdity below my further Notice. Nor will it ſalve the matter to ſay, That they are neceſſary to declare our Juſtification before *Men*, or to aſcertain it to our ſelves, and the like; for alas, what does ſuch a Neceſſity amount to? No more than this, That they are neceſſary for ſuch Ends which themſelves are not neceſſary. And beſides, How can they *Declare* or Aſcertain our Juſtification, when they are not the *Conditions* of it? So that 'tis plain, both from the *lateneſs* of the Time when, and from the *incompetency* of the Grounds for which they inſert good Works, that they put them merely out of *Complaiſance*; not becauſe they think them neceſſary, but becauſe they are aſhamed to declare expreſly, that they are not. Which appears yet further, from the *Nature* of thoſe Works they are at *length* pleaſed to inſert. They are ſuch (for there is nothing that theſe Men are ſo much afraid of as *meriting*) as are much ſhort of that Sincerity and Perfection which is required by the Goſpel. For 'tis notorious, that they ſet the

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State of Regeneration ſo *Low*, that 'tis conſiſtent with the Dominion and Prevalency of ſin. A bare reluctancy of the Spirit (tho' foil'd in the Conflict) againſt the Fleſh, is eſteemed a ſufficient Mark of a *Regenerate* Perſon; and this every Sinner that has the leaſt Remains of Conſcience, the leaſt *Twilight* of Natural Light left him, muſt needs have; for no Man loves Sin for it *ſelf*; nay, he hates it as 'tis in its ſelf abſolutely an Evil, only he chuſes and wiſhs it *Comparatively* to avoid (as he then thinks) a greater Evil.

10. Thus as the *Jewiſh* Doctors did the *Law*, Mat. 15. 6. do theſe Men make the *Goſpel*, of none effect by their *Traditions*; and would queſtionleſs, were our Lord now on Earth, have a ſeverer Woe pronounced againſt them, as Perverters of a more Excellent, a more Perfect Inſtitution. Strange, that Men ſhould Corrupt and Ridicule ſo admirable a Diſpenſation; and turn ſo great a Grace of God into Wantonneſs! That there ſhould be ſome *Scandal* in the Goſpel, which unlearned and unſtable Men might wreſt to their own Deſtruction, is no very hard matter to imagine; but that Men ſhould at once pervert the whole Scope and Deſign of it, is Prodigious, as well as Antichriſtian; a *Myſtery* of *Wonder* as well as of Iniquity. And have theſe Men the Face to declaim againſt the Papiſts for leaving out one of the Commandments, whenas, they draw a black Stroke over the whole Table? Nay further, Have they the Face to call themſelves Chriſtians, and that of the Purer Sort too, who thus evacuate the *Myſtery* of *Godlineſs*? By the ſame Figure of Speech might the Heathen Emperours aſſume that

Sacred

Sacred Name, when they endeavoured to Perſecute it out of the World. Nay, much more plauſibly; for they only Lopt off the Branches, but theſe Strike at the very Root of Chriſtianity; they applied their Forces againſt the Profeſſors of the Chriſtian Religion, theſe againſt the Religion it ſelf; and (what aggravates the Malice) not as open Enemies, but as Treacherous Friends, under the demure pretence of *Purity*, *Orthodoxy*, and *Saintſhip*. They Cancel the Law of Chriſt, and at the ſame time pretend to Advance his Kingdom; call him Maſter, Kiſs and Betray him. And how can it now be expected, that theſe Men ſhould be more forward than they are, to yield Obedience to the *King*, who have found out an Expedient to Slip their Necks out of *Chriſt*'s Yoke; and have made the Goſpel in a worſe ſenſe, a *Dead* Letter than the *Law?*

11. But certainly the Gate that leads to Heaven is much Streighter than theſe Men are pleaſed to make it, otherwiſe there would be no need of *ſtriving* to enter in at it, *Luk.* 13. 24. There are Things to be done, as well as to be believed and underſtood under the Evangelical Diſpenſation; and Chriſtianity is a *Service*, as well as a *Profeſſion*. To the Clearing and Eſtabliſhing of which Propoſition, I ſhall conſider the Goſpel under a double Capacity, 1*ſt*, As a Law, and 2*ly*, As a Covenant. And firſt, as a *Law*. 'Tis moſt certain that Chriſt was a Lawgiver as well as *Moſes*; only as he was an *Introducer of a better Hope*, Heb. 7. 19. ſo he required better and ſublimer Services. The Advantage of Chriſtianity, does not conſiſt in having any

any Abatements of Duty; for Chriſt was ſo far from diminiſhing or retrenching the Moral Law, (for 'tis of that I ſpeak) that he improved every part of it to higher Senſes than the moſt Exquiſite of the Jewiſh Doctors underſtood; or at leaſt, conceiv'd themſelves oblig'd to; As is evident from his Divine Sermon on the Mount, which from the Perfection and Sublimity of it's Precepts. St. *Chryſoſtom* calls, Ἄκρον ἡ Φιλοσοφίας, *the Top and Height of Philoſophy.*

12. And that he thus improv'd the Law of *Moſes*; beſides the Evidence of *Compariſon*, we have his own expreſs Word for it, Mat. 5. 17. *I come not to deſtroy the Law, but to perfect*, compleat, or fill it up. For ſo the word (πληρῶσαι,) properly ſignifies. The σκιαγραφία, or rude draught, was *Moſes* his part; but the ζωγράφησις τελεία, or the Painting to the Life, was Chriſt's. *Moſes* drew out the main Lineaments, the *Skeleton* of the Picture (which was therefore call'd the *Body of Moſes*, Jud. 9.) but 'twas Chriſt that fill'd up all its Intervals and Vacuities; and gave it all it's Graces, *Air*, and *Life-touches*. And this is no more than what the Analogy of the Chriſtian Diſpenſation required. The great End and Deſign of God Incarnate was, to Perfect Holineſs, as well as to Retrieve Happineſs; to Advance the Intereſts of the Divine Life, and make us *Partakers of the Divine Nature*, 2. Pet. 1. 4. Heb. 1. 3. and accordingly as he himſelf was the *expreſs Image* of his Father's Perſon, ſo 'twas requiſite he ſhould Conſign to us an Expreſs Image, or Correct Copy of his Father's Will. He was to make us better Men; and accordingly, 'twas fit he

he ſhould give us a better Law; a Law that could not be ſatisfied, but by ſuch a Righteouſneſs, as ſhould exceed even the Strickteſt among the *Jews*, that of the *Phariſees*. So that we are by no means Releaſed, but rather more deeply Engaged in Duty by the Goſpel, as 'tis a *Law*.

13. Nor *Secondly*, Are we Releaſed by it, as 'tis a *Covenant*. Here indeed, begin the *Abatements* of the Goſpel, not as to *Duty* and *Obligation*, for the Goſpel makes all that our Duty which the Law did, and more; only (which in ſhort is the true Difference between the Two Covenants) it does not make the ſtrict and exact Performance of it the Meaſure, the ultimate Meaſure whereby we are to Stand or Fall; but admits of *Pardon*, which the Law knew nothing of. Not of *Abſolute* Pardon, for then the Goſpel would be a *Covenant* without a *Condition*; nor of Pardon without Repentance, and actual Reformation of Manners; for then the Goſpel as a *Covenant*, would Interfere with its ſelf as a *Law*; but upon the ſole Conditions of Faith and Repentance. For 'tis a great Miſtake to think that we are actually Juſtified or Pardoned by the Satisfaction of Chriſt; this wou'd be the moſt ready Expedient to verifie the falſe Charge of the Scribes and Phariſees, and make him in their Senſe a Friend to Publicans and Sinners; to Encourage all manner of Vice and Immorality, and to Turn the *Myſtery of Godlineſs*, into a *Myſtery of Iniquity*. No, Chriſt in this Senſe, has Redeemed no Man. All that he either did, or could in Wiſdom do for us as Satisfying, was in ſhort, to inſtate us in a Capacity and Poſſibility of Pardon and Reconciliation,

conciliation, by procuring a Grant from his Father, That Faith and Repentance ſhould now be Available to Juſtification; which without his Satisfaction, would not have been Accepted to that Purpoſe. Whereby it appears, that he was ſo far from ſuperſeding the Neceſſity of Repentance and Good Works, that he deſigned only to make Way for the *Succeſs* of them; He did ſo much, that Repentance might not be in *Vain*; and he did no more, that it might not be *Needleſs*. And thus does the *Wiſdom*, as well as the *Goodneſs* of God, lead us to Repentance; by ſo ordering the matter, that we may Obtain Pardon with it, and not without it; which are the two ſtrongeſt Engagements to *Action* in any Concern, that our *Reaſon* either *Demands*, or our *Deliberation* can *Suggeſt*.

14. This I conceive, to be the true Hypotheſis and State of Chriſtianity; which I might yet further Confirm, by infinite Authorities from Scripture; which every where preſſes the Neceſſity of good Works, as *Conditions* to our *Juſtification* and Acceptance before God: But I think the more rational and unprejudiced Part of the World, are pretty well ſatisfied in that Point; and know how to accomodate St. *James* and St. *Paul*, better than ſome late *Reconcilers*. And beſides, The Wiſdom of the Hypotheſis ſufficiently Approves it ſelf; 'Tis ſuch, as becomes the Perfections of the Divine Nature to Exhibit to the World; and which the Angels may well deſire to look into, 1 *Pet.* 1. 12. For 'tis at once, fitted to the *Neceſſities* of Man; and to the *Honour* of God; to the Infirmities of the *Animal* Life; and to the Advancement of the *Divine*;

Divine; to the Relief of the *Sinner*, and to the ſuppreſſion of *Sin*. Here *Mercy and Truth meet together, Righteouſneſs and Peace kiſs each other*. The Sacrifice of the Altar, does not prejudice the Ballance of the Sanctuary; and the Divine Juſtice is ſo ſatisfy'd, that the Neceſſity of Holineſs and Obedience remains ſecured. Much is forgiven, and much is to be done; Duty continues as faſt as ever, and even the *Law* of *Liberty* is a *Service*.

15. And now that this may not be thought a *Hard* ſaying, and make ſome of Jeſus his Diſciples to go back, (as once they did) and walk no more with him when they hear of Duty, and ſomething to be done, I ſhall now proceed to Demonſtrate the *Reaſonableneſs* of that Service which Chriſtianity requires of us; which was the Second general Propoſition I purpoſed to ſpeak to.

16. Religion is ſo very agreeable, both to the *Inclinations* and *Diſcourſings* of *Humane Nature*, that as none is Capable of being Religious but a Rational Creature, ſo 'tis almoſt Impoſſible for a Creature to be indued with Reaſon, and not to be Religious. Hence 'tis, that there is no Nation ſo Barbarous and Degenerate, but what has ſome Religion or other; and tho' Ignorant of the true Object as well as Manner of Worſhip, yet rather than wholly abſtain from Religious Applications, will adore *implicitely*, and Erect an Altar, Ἀγνώστῳ Θεῷ, *to the unknown God*.

17. Nay, ſo great a Congruity is there between Religion, and the Radical Notices and Sentiments of a Human Soul, that all Mankind, except only ſome few diſtorted and *Anomalous* Heads (for there are

are Monſtroſities in the *Soul* as well as the *Body*) are unanimouſly agreed upon the *fundamental* and *ſubſtantial* Maxims of it; which for their Correſpondency to our Rational Natures, are uſually diſtinguiſhed by the Name of *Natural Religion*. For there are Practical as well as Speculative Principles; and that he who does no Hurt, is to receive none, is as evident a Propoſition in *Morality*, as that the Whole, is greater than its Part, is in the *Mathematics*; or, That Nothing can be, and not be at once, is in the *Metaphyſics*.

18. And as *Religion* and *Natural* Religion, carry ſuch a ſtrict Conformity to our Rational Faculties, ſo does *Revealed* Religion too. All the Lines of this, as well as of the other, point all the way at, and at laſt concentre in the Happineſs and Welfare of Mankind. 'Tis a purſuance of the ſame excellent End, only by more cloſe and direct Means. For God in all his Intercourſes with us, does accommodate himſelf to our *Natures*; and as he will not forcibly *determine* us to *good*, becauſe he has made us free, ſo neither does he require any thing from us, but what is good, and conſiſtent with *Reaſon*; becauſe he has made us *Rational*. And altho' we cannot by this *Candle of the Lord*, Prov. 20. 27. find out ſome of the *great* and *wonderful* Things of his Law (for herein conſiſts the formal difference between Natural and Reveal'd Religion) yet when they are once propoſed to us, they are highly approved by our Intellectual Reliſh, and ſtrike perfect Uniſons to the Voice of our Reaſon; ſo that even the *Animal* Man (for 'tis of him the Apoſtle there ſpeaks) *conſents to the Law that it is good*, Rom. 7. 16.

19. And indeed, were it not ſo, it would be as unfit for God to propoſe, as hard for Man to receive; ſince even the Prudence of a *Nation*, is by no one thing either more Juſtified or Condemned, than by the good or ill Contrivance of its *Laws*. Shall not then the *Law-giver* of the whole World, *enact that which is right*, Gen. 18. 25. as well as the *Judge* of all the Earth do right? Shall he not be as *Wiſe* in the *Framing* of his Law, as he is *Juſt* in the *Execution* of it? God in contriving the Mechaniſm of the material World, diſplay'd the Excellency of his Divine *Geometry*, and made all things in *Number*, *Weight* and *Meaſure*. *He eſtabliſhed the World by his Wiſdom, and ſtretched out the Heavens by his Diſcretion*, Jer. 10. 12. And ſhall he not govern the Intellectual World with as much Wiſdom as he made the Natural one? Queſtionleſs he does; and the Law which he has preſcribed to us, is as Perfect and Excellent, as that whereby he wrought the Beauty and Order of the Univerſe. For *the Lord is Righteous in all his Ways, and Holy in all his Works*, Pſal. 145. He has accommodated his Statutes and Judgments, both to the Infinite Perfection of his own Nature, and to the actual Perfection and Capacity of ours. *God is a Spirit*, and accordingly (as the Apoſtle tells us) *the Law is Spiritual*, Rom. 7. 14. Man is Rational; and accordingly, the Homage he is to pay to him that made him ſo, is no other than a *Reaſonable Service*.

20. But to be as Compendious, and withal as juſt and diſtinct as may be in ſo Copious and Plentiful a Subject, I conſider, That as the whole Rational Nature of Man conſiſts of Two Faculties, Under-

Underſtanding and Will, (whether really or notionally diſtinct, I ſhall not now diſpute) ſo Chriſtianity, whoſe End is to Perfect the Whole Man, and give the laſt Accompliſhment both to our Intellectual and Moral Powers, will be wholly abſolved in theſe Two Parts, Things to be believed, and Things to be done. If therefore in both theſe, it can Acquit it ſelf at the *Bar* of *Reaſon*, the Concluſion is evident, That it is a *Reaſonable Service.*

21. Firſt then, As to the Things which are to be believed. Now theſe are either the Authority and Truth of the whole Chriſtian Inſtitution; or the Truth of particular Myſteries contained in it. The firſt of theſe will appear to be a reaſonable Object of Faith two ways; 1*ſt*, From the Nature of its Deſign, and its excellent Aptneſs to Compaſs it; and 2*ly*, From Extrinſick Arguments, and Collateral Circumſtances. And *Firſt*, 'Tis recommended to us by the Nature of its Deſign, and its excellent Aptneſs to Compaſs it. It is (according to the precedent Repreſentation) a very Wiſe and Rational *Hypotheſis*, above the Reaſon of Man indeed, at firſt to Contrive; but ſuch as when propoſed, it muſt needs Approve and Acquieſce in, as at once the *Power and Wiſdom of God*, 1 Cor. 1. 24. becauſe (as I firſt obſerved, and ſhall hereafter more plainly demonſtrate) 'tis ſo admirably fitted to the Honour of God, and to the Neceſſities of Man; thereby verifying that double part of the Angelical Anthem at the Appearance of its Divine Author; and at once bringing *Glory to God on High, and on Earth Peace, good will towards Men*, Luk. 2. 14.

22. And as it appears thus Rational in its general *Idea* or *Structure*, and thereby ſpeaks it ſelf *worthy* of God; ſo *Secondly*, that it came *actually* from him no Rational Perſon can doubt, that conſiders that Conjugation of Arguments, that *Cloud* of *Witneſſes* whereby its Divine Original ſtands Atteſted. Such as are the Variety of Propheſies and Prefigurations, their punctual and exact Accompliſhment in the Author of this Inſtitution, his Birth, Life, Miracles and Doctrin, his Paſſion, Death, Reſurrection and Aſcenſion; with all the wonderful *Arrear* and Train in Accidents that enſued for the Confirmation of Chriſtianity; ſuch as the wonderful Suſtentation, Protection, Increaſe and Continuation of Chriſt's little Flock, the Chriſtian Church; the Miraculous *Aſſiſtances*, and Miraculous *Actions* of the Apoſtles; the Harmony of the Evangeliſts; the Conſtancy and Courage of his firſt Witneſſes and Martyrs; the Defeat of the Infernal Powers in the ſilencing of Oracles; the juſt Puniſhment that lighted upon his Enemies; and laſtly, the Completion of all Propheſies that proceeded out of his Divine Mouth while on Earth; which I ſhall here only point at in general, and leave to the inlargement of every Mans Private Meditation.

23. Then as for the Particular Myſteries contained in Chriſtianity, I know but of Three that threaten any *diſturbance* to our *Philoſophy*; and thoſe are the Three Catholick ones mentioned by St. *Athanaſius*, the *Trinity*, the *Hypoſtatick Union*, and the *Reſurrection*. Now concerning the two firſt, I obſerve, that they are indeed above the adequate Comprehenſion of our Reaſon; but not Contrary, or Repugnant to it. For as we cannot Conceive

how

how theſe things *can* be, ſo neither do we poſitively and clearly perceive that they *cannot* be, as we do in Contradictions, and Things contrary to Reaſon. But as to the laſt, I don't in the leaſt underſtand why it *ſhould be thought a thing incredible that God* (whoſe very Notion involves Omnipotence) *ſhould raiſe the Dead*, Acts 26. 8. 'Tis true, we are as Ignorant how this can be, as in either of the former Articles; but that it abſolutely *may* be, there is much plainer evidence; eſpecially to thoſe who think it reaſonable to Believe a *Creation*. Which if taken according to ſtrictneſs of Notion, for a Production of Something out of Nothing, is moſt confeſſedly a greater and more difficult performance (as to the Nature of the Work) than the Raiſing of the Dead can be. Or if more largely, for producing Something out of præexiſtent, but naturally unapt Matter, yet 'tis ſtill at leaſt Equal with it. He that with the bare Energy of his Omnipotent Word, could inſpirit the dead, ſtupid, void and formleſs Maſs, and make it move into a Frame ſo Elegant and Harmonious, that the mere *Contemplation* of its Beauty and Order, has by many Philoſophers been thought a ſufficient Entertainment of Life, may eaſily be preſumed to be able to do the ſame in the *leſſer* World; and with effect to ſay to a rude and diſorder'd Heap of Duſt, *Chaos* of a Human Body, *Stand up and Live.*

24. But after all, were this Article of the Reſurrection much more thick-ſet with Difficulties than it is, yet would we, before we venture to determine againſt its Poſſibility, ſit a while and conſider, that we are nonplus'd at a Thouſand *Phæno-*

menas in Nature, which if they were not done, we ſhould have thought them abſolutely impoſſible; (as for Inſtance, to go no further, the *Central Libration* of the Earth) and now they are, we cannot comprehend 'em; that *we have ſeen but a few of God's Works*, and underſtand yet fewer: And laſtly, That as the Poſſibility of the Effect is above the Comprehenſion of our Reaſon, ſo the Power of the Agent is much more ſo; we ſhould diſcern great Reaſon to be Cautious how we ſet Limits to the Divine Omnipotence; and ſhould rather ſupport our Faith againſt all Objections, with that Univerſal Salvo of the Apoſtle, *I know whom I have believed*, 2 Tim. 1. 12.

25. I deſcend now from the Things that are to be *Believed*, to the Things that are to be Done in the Chriſtian Religion. And that thoſe may appear to be a Reaſonable Service, I conſider firſt in general, That the Chriſtian Law is nothing elſe but the Law of Nature *retrieved*, *explained*, and ſet in a *clearer* Light. Chriſt indeed, added ſome new Precepts that were not in the *Law* of *Moſes*; but not any that were not in the *Law* of *Naure*. *That* he only reſtored and reſcued from the Sophiſtications of ill Principles, and the Corruptions of degenerate Manners. For the clearer underſtanding of which Propoſition, 'tis to be obſerved, that the Law of Nature was *twice* Retrieved, by *Moſes*, and by *Chriſt*. *Moſes* did it imperfectly, with a *ſhaking* Hand, and with a *rude* Pencil; He adopted 'tis true, into his Table, as many of Natures Laws as were neceſſary to the preſent State and Capacity of the Jewiſh People; but he did not Exhauſt the whole

Code

Code and *Digeſt* of Nature. For there are many Inſtances and Branches of the Natural Law, which are no way reducible to the Moſaick Tables, unleſs hooked in by long tedious Conſequences; which as the Law never intended, ſo neither is one of a Thouſand able to deduce them from it; as appears in the Inſtances of Gratitude to Benefactors; Love to Enemies, Forgiveneſs of Injuries; Humility, and the like, which are Excellencies of the *firſt Magnitude* in the Imperial Conſtitutions of Nature, but not Tranſcribed in the Copy and Extract of *Moſes*, as too Refined for the Groſſneſs of that Age; for the Hardneſs of the Jewiſh People, and for the Infancy of that Diſpenſation.

26. This therefore was reſerved for the Work of a Diviner Prophet, who ſhould Retrieve the Law of Nature to the full, and Reſtore it as at the Beginning. For he came (as he teſtifies of himſelf, Mat. 5. 17. and as was before obſerved to another purpoſe) to fill up *Moſes* his Law, which implies, that it was Imperfect and Deficient; and wherein ſhould its Defectiveneſs conſiſt, but in wanting ſomething of the *Natural* Law? The Chriſtian Law therefore, is only the Law of Nature retrieved.

27. This being premiſed, 'tis but now to conſider what the Formal Notion of the Law of Nature is; and we have found out one *general* Meaſure whereby to judge of the Reaſonableneſs of the *Chriſtian* Law. Now by the Law of Nature, I ſuppoſe, we all underſtand certain Practical Maxims or Dictates, the Obſerving or Tranſgreſſing of which, conſidering the preſent Syſtem of the Uni-

verſe, have a *natural* Connexion with the well or ill Being of Man, either as to his *private* or *political* Capacity. I ſay, conſidering the *preſent Syſtem* of the Univerſe. For no queſtion, God might have ſo contrived the Order and Scheme of the Creation, as that many of thoſe Things which are now for the *Intereſt*, might have been for the *Diſintereſt* of Mankind; as he might have ſo Framed the texture of a Human Body, that what is now Wholſome and Sovereign, might have been Poiſonous and Pernicious; and in this reſpect, I conceive the Law of Nature may be ſaid to *depend* upon the Arbitrary Will of God; and to be *mutable* at his Pleaſure. But yet it ſtill remains immutably true in the *general*, That whatſoever has ſuch a Natural Ordination to, or Connexion with the well or ill Being of Mankind, is Good or Evil reſpectively. This is the Standard of Morality, and Immorality; and the Eſſential Difference between Virtue and Vice. And 'tis as immutably true, that ſome *particular* Inſtances ſhould have ſuch a Natural Connexion, *ſtante rerum Hypotheſi*, during the preſent State and Order of Things. Now whatever has ſo, is an Eſſential Branch of the Law of Nature; and obliges us to Act, or not to Act, reſpectively to the *Term* of its Ordination. So that *Bonum honeſtum*, is that which in the Order of Things, is *Bonum utile*, and conduces as a *Natural Medium* to Felicity; which is the End of Man.

28. Hence then it follows, That the Chriſtian Law, which is nothing elſe but the Law of Nature retrieved, conſiſts only of ſuch practical Maxims, which carry a *Natural* Relation to the true Intereſt and

and well Being of Mankind; and conſequently, contains nothing in it but what is Reaſonable, very Reaſonable to be *Done*. But to Evince this more particularly, 'twill be requiſite to take a Curſory View of the Chriſtian Law. And this I ſhall conſider, Firſt, as I find it ſumm'd up in general by our Bleſſed Saviour, in Anſwer to the Lawyers Queſtion, *What he ſhould do to inherit Eternal Life*: And Secondly, In ſome of thoſe particular Inſtances of it, which ſeem *moſt* to Croſs the preſent Intereſt of Mankind.

29. As to the Firſt, The Sum which our Bleſſed Saviour gave of it was this: *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind, and thy Neighbour as thy ſelf*, Mat. 22. 37. Mark 12. 30. Luke 10. 27. Theſe he told him, were the Two great Commandments; and that there were none greater than theſe: And certainly, none more *reaſonable*. For ſince Man is not his own End, but has an *Amorous Principle* within him, which Tranſports him to Good without himſelf; ſince he is not a *Central* and *ſelf-terminating* Being, but by the weight of his Affections gravitates and inclines to ſomething *further*, what is more Reaſonable than that he fix upon *God* as his *Center*, who is as well the *End* as the *Author* of his Being? And ſince whatever Portion of his Love is not directed thither, will neceſſarily light (for it cannot be Idle, and muſt fix ſomewhere) upon diſproportionate and vain Objects which neither *deſerve* it, nor can *ſatisfie* it, and conſequently will but vex and torment him; what can be more Reaſonable than that he *Unite* and *Concenter* all the Rays of his Affection

both

both Intellectual and Senſitive upon God; and according to the *ſtricteſt* Senſe of this great Commandment, Love him with all his Heart, Soul and Mind; *Viſion* and *Love* make up the full Compoſition of our Celeſtial Happineſs hereafter; and they are the neareſt Approach we can make to it here.

30. Nor is the Second great Commandment leſs reaſonable than the Firſt. The trueſt and moſt effectual way a Man can take to Love himſelf, is to Love his Neighbour as himſelf. For ſince Man is a neceſſitous and indigent Creature (of all Creatures the moſt indigent) and ſince he cannot upon his own ſolitary Stock, ſupply the neceſſities of his Nature, (the want of Society being one of them) and ſince of all Creatures here below, none is capable of doing him either ſo much *good*, or ſo much *harm*, as thoſe of his own Species; as 'twill be his beſt *Security* to have as many Friends, and as few Enemies as he can; ſo, as a Means to this, to Hate and Injure *none*, but to Love and Oblige *all*, will be his beſt *Policy*. So far is the State of Nature from being (according to the Elements of the *Leviathan*) a State of Hoſtility and War, that there is no One Thing that makes more apparently for the Intereſt of Mankind, than Univerſal Charity and Benevolence. And indeed, would all Men but once agree to Eſpouſe one anothers Intereſt, and Proſecute the Publick Good truly and faithfully, nothing would be wanting to Verifie and Realize the Dreams of the Golden Age, to Anticipate the *Millennial* Happineſs, and bring down Heaven upon Earth. Society would ſtand firm and compact, like a *Mathematical Frame of Architecture*, ſupported by mutual De-

Dependencies and Coherences; and every Man's Kindneſſes would return again upon himſelf, in the *Circle* and *Reciprocation* of Love.

31. But, beſides this Conſideration of *Intereſt*, there is another which equally contributes to Recommend this Law of Univerſal Benevolence; and perhaps, with more ſweetneſs of Inſinuation than the former, and that is Pleaſure. Theſe two are put together by the Pſalmiſt, who tells us, *That 'tis both good and pleaſant for Brethren to dwell together in Unity*, Pſal. 133. 1. There is certainly, a moſt Divine Pleaſure in the Acts and Expreſſes of Benevolence; ſo that if God may be ſaid to take Pleaſure in any one Thing, beſides the Richneſs of his own Infinity, it muſt be in the *Communication* of it. Sure I am, no Man can do Good to another, without Recreating and Feaſting his own Spirit; nay, even the moſt Happy and ſelf-ſufficient Man, who as to his *Intereſt*, has the leaſt need to be Kind and Obliging, yet as to his *Pleaſure*, has the greateſt. For he enjoys his Happy State moſt, when he Communicates it, and takes a Partner with him into Paradiſe, and receives a more vigorous Joy from the *Reflexion*, than from the *direct Incidency* of his Happineſs

32. I might here take occaſion to ſhew, the Reaſonableneſs of Juſtice and Honeſty; with other particular Branches of this great Law: But the Neceſſity of theſe is ſo *Notorious* (no Society being able to ſubſiſt without them.) and withal ſo atteſted by the Common Vote and Experience of the World (it being the Buſineſs of all Human Laws, and the End of all Civil Government, to Engage Men

Men to the Obſervance of them) that I ſhall not need to make any Plea in their behalf. Inſtead therefore of lending any farther Light to what Shines already ſo Conſpicuouſly by its own, I ſhall now proceed to juſtify the Chriſtian Law in ſome of thoſe Inſtances which ſeem moſt to Croſs the preſent Intereſt of Mankind.

33. There are ſome Precepts of the Chriſtian Law which ſeem directly, and in their whole Kind, to be againſt the Intereſt of Man. For (as for thoſe which may accidentally and in ſome Junctures of Circumſtances, I ſhall Conſider them afterwards.) Now theſe I ſhall derive from that Abſtract of Chriſtian Philoſophy, the Divine Sermon on the Mount. The *firſt* Inſtance ſhall be in the Precept of Meekneſs, which our Divine Lawgiver has extended ſo far as τῷ πονηρῷ μὴ ἀντιςῆναι, that we reſiſt not Evil, *Mat.* 5. 39. which is not to be underſtood in Prejudice either of the Civil Sword, or of Legal Proſecutions for the Reparation of Injuries (for this would be to give the worſt of Men a continual Advantage againſt the beſt) nor of publick Wars between diſtinct Kingdoms (for they being under no Common Juriſdiction, have no other Expedient whereby to right themſelves when injured) but only as to *Private* Perſons, who by Virtue of this Precept are not permitted (unleſs in apparent Danger of Life; for then the Law of Self-Preſervation takes place, the Benefit of other Laws being not at Hand) I ſay are not permitted to Retaliate Evil, but obliged rather with their Divine Maſter, to *give their Backs to the Smiters, and their Cheeks to them that Pluckt off the Hair*, Iſa. 50. 6.

34. Now

34. Now this may ſeem a very diſadvantagious and inconvenient Command, in as much as it may be ſaid by tying up our Hands, to Expoſe us to all manner of Contumelies and Affronts, and invite the ill Treatments of rude and diſingenuous Spirits. But whoever ſeriouſly conſiders the Matter will find, that pure and ſimple Revenge is a thing very abſurd, and very productive of ill Conſequences; and in ſome reſpects, worſe than the *firſt* Injury. For that may have ſome Ends of Profit and Advantage in it; but to do another Man a diskindneſs merely becauſe he has done me one, ſerves to no good Purpoſe, and to many ill ones. For it contributes nothing to the reparation of the firſt Injury (it being impoſſible that the *Act* of any wrong ſhould be reſcinded, tho' the *permanent Effect* may) but inſtead of making up the Breach of my *Happineſs*, it increaſes the Objects of my *Pity*, by bringing in a new Miſery into the World more than was before, and occaſions freſh returns of Malice, one begetting another like the *encirclings* of diſturbed Water, 'till the Evil becomes fruitful, and multiplies into a long Succeſſion, a *Genealogy* of Miſchiefs. And by this time, I think the Man has reaſon to Repent him of his Revenge; and to be convinced of the Equity of the Law which forbids it.

35. The next Inſtance I ſhall mention, is that of loving *Enemies*. This runs higher than the former, that being only Negative, not to return Evil, but this Poſitive, to do Good. A ſtrange Precept one would think, and highly Contradictory to *Reaſon* as well as *Nature*. But whoever conſiders the great

great uſefulneſs of Love and Benevolence to the Intereſt of Society, will quickly perceive, that he ought not to be diſingaged from the obſervance of ſo neceſſary a Duty, upon ſo ſlight a ground as another's Default in it. I grant, 'tis neither Reaſonable, nor poſſible, to love an Enemy for being ſo, (that is no proper Motive of Love) but yet 'tis very reaſonable to Love the *Man* notwithſtanding his *Enmity*. Becauſe the neceſſity of Charity is ſo indiſpenſable, that it ought to oblige in all Caſes. And beſides, as by this means all Enmity is certainly prevented on one ſide (which is of very great Conſideration to the Publick Peace) ſo is it the likelieſt Method to bring over the other. Kindneſſes will at length prevail upon him, who is proof againſt all the Senſe of Duty and Conſcience, and the Coals of Fire which are heaped upon his Head (when nothing elſe will do it) will melt him down into Love and Sweetneſs.

36. There is one Inſtance more, wherein the Chriſtian Law ſeems not to conſult the Intereſt of Human Life, and that is in the matter of *Divorce*; which our Saviour allows in no Caſe but that of Adultery. Now this alſo ſeems to be one of the *hard ſayings*. For the natural propenſion to Procreation is not to be ſatisfied out of Marriage, and Marriage by this Appendage ſeems to be ſuch a Burthen that the Diſciples might well ſay, *if the Caſe of Man be ſo with his Wife, it is not good to Marry*, Matt. 19. 10. But yet upon Conſideration, this alſo will appear to be a very Reaſonable Confinement. For *Firſt*, All the ſuppoſable Inconveniencies of this Reſtraint may be in a great Meaſure pre-

prevented by Prudent and Wiſe Choice. But ſuppoſe they cannot, yet, *Secondly*, As 'twould be moſt adviſable for *ſome* Men to Marry tho' with this Reſtraint, ſo is Marriage with this Reſtraint better for *Society* than without it. For were there Liberty of Divorce upon other Grounds, every petty diſlike would never want a Pretence for a *Diſſolution*; and then the ſame Inconveniencies would enſue, as if there were no ſuch thing as the Matrimonial Inſtitution; ſuch as diminution of Affection to Children, neglect of their Education, and the like; beſides the perpetual Quarrels and Animoſities between the Parties themſelves ſo divided, and their reſpective Relatives, all which would bring more Inconveniencies upon Society, than thoſe which are pretended to be avoided by diſtending and *enlarging* the Licence of Divorce.

37. Now if to this Apology for the Reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity taken from its Conducivenes and Natural Tendency to the Intereſt of Human Life, we further add, the Dominion and Right that God has over us, the great Benefits wherewith he has already prevented us, and the exceeding weight of Glory laid up in Reverſion for us; And would we further conſider, that Holineſs has a Natural Ordination to the Happineſs of *Heaven* as well as of *Earth*, that 'tis among the τὰ ἐχόμενα σωτηρίας, the things that *accompany*, or are eſſentially retaining to Salvation; ſo that would God in mercy diſpenſe with it as a *Conditionary*, yet we could not be Happy without it, as a *natural* Qualification for Heaven. Further yet, would we conſider the great *Eaſineſs* as well as manifold Advantage of Chriſtianity,

anity, that many Inſtances of Duty are agreeable to the Inclinations of Nature; and that where there *is* a Law in our Members that runs Counter to that of the Mind, we have the Aids and Aſſiſtnaces of *Grace*; that God has required nothing of us but what is *ſubſtantially* within the Verge and Compaſs of Human Nature; for to *Believe*, *Repent* and *Love*, are all Natural Acts; we believe ſome Stories, we repent of ſome Follies, we love ſome Men, and God obliges us but to Believe *him*, to Repent of Follies againſt *him*, and to Love *him*. The Acts are the ſame for their *ſubſtance*, tho' not in their *determination*. Laſtly, would we conſider how much all this is confirm'd by the Argument of *Practice* and *Experience*; that the Devil has more Apoſtates than Chriſt; that the number of thoſe who leave Sin, and come over to Virtue, is much greater than of thoſe that leave Virtue and come over to Sin, (which is the Apology that the Platoniſt *Simplicius* makes for Virtue) the Concluſion would be placed beyond the reach of Controverſie, That Chriſtianity is a *Reaſonable Service*, and that the Precepts of our excellent Law-giver both begin, continue, and end with a *Beatitude*.

38. I can now foreſee but one Objection of any moment which the Argument of this Diſcourſe is liable to, which is, that altho Virtue and Vice have a Natural Ordination to the Happineſs and Miſery of Life reſpectively, yet it may ſo happen by the intervening of ſome Accidents, that this connexion of things may be broken off; and that a Man may be a loſer by Virtue, and a gainer by Vice, as in the inſtances of *Martyrdom* and *ſecure Theft*. And here the

the Queſtion will be, Whether it be then reaſonable to act Virtuouſly, and unreaſonable to do the Contrary. To this I Anſwer, 1*ſt*, That it may be juſtly queſtion'd (notwithſtanding the intervention of any Accidents) whether a Man may be Virtuous to his Diſadvantage, or Vicious to his Advantage, even as to *this preſent* State, conſidering the internal Satisfaction and Acquieſcence, or diſſatisfaction and moleſtation of Spirit that attend the practice of Virtue and Vice reſpectively. But ſuppoſing he may, then 2*ly*, I reply, That here come in the Rewards and Puniſhments of another Life to ſupply the Natural Sanction of the Law. Then 3*dly*, To the ſecond Inſtance I offer this in peculiar, that altho in ſome Circumſtances I might be diſhoneſt to my preſent Gain, yet 'tis very reaſonable, that all ſhould be obliged to the Law of Juſtice. Becauſe if every one ſhould be permitted to uſe ſecret Frauds (and all may as well as one) the Evil would come about again, even to him whom we juſt now ſuppoſed a gainer by his Theft: And as to the Public, 'twould be all one as if there were no *Property*; and then for want of *Encouragement* and *Security*, the final iſſue of the matter would be, an utter neglect and diſimprovement of the Earth, and a continual diſturbance of the Public Peace. So that when all's done, *Honeſty is the beſt Policy*; and to live moſt happily, is to live moſt Virtuouſly and Religiouſly. So true is that of the Pſalmiſt, *I ſee that all things come to an end, but thy Commandment is exceeding broad*, Pſal. 119.

39. From what has been hitherto diſcourſed, I ſhall now briefly deduce ſome Practical Inferences, and conclude. Since then our Religion is ſo Reaſonable a Service, 'twill follow hence in the firſt place, that there may be a due exerciſe and uſe of *Reaſon* in *Divine* Matters; and that whoſoever is apparently contrary to *Reaſon*, ought not to be obtruded as of *Divine Authority*, nor be accounted as any part of the *Chriſtian* Religion. An Inference wherein the Faith of the Church of *Rome* is not a little concern'd.

40. 'Twill follow *Secondly*, That no Man ought to be Perſecuted, or have any external Violence done him for his *Religion*, ſuppoſing that by *Overt* Acts, he give no diſturbance to the *Public*. For ſince God has required nothing of us but what is agreeable to our Reaſon, why ſhould Man?

41. 'Twill follow *Thirdly*, That Sin is the very Height and Extremity of *Folly* and *Diſingenuity*. Of *Folly*, becauſe it croſſes and defeats the excellent End of Man; which is to live happily and commodiouſly. And of *Diſingenuity*, becauſe 'tis committed againſt him, who when he might by Virtue of his Supream Dominion have impoſed upon us *Arbitrary* Laws (as that given to *Adam*) or *hard* and ſevere ones (as that to *Abraham*) has been graciouſly pleaſed to make nothing the Condition of our Happineſs, but what upon other accounts would have been moſt adviſable to be done. This certainly will render Sin *exceeding ſinful*, and leave the *Sinner* without the leaſt ſhadow of an Excuſe. We commonly derive the aggravations of Sin from the *greatneſs* of God; but without queſtion, his

goodneſs

goodneſs will ſupply us with as many; and in this ſenſe alſo 'twill be true to ſay, *As is his Majeſty, ſo is his Mercy.*

42. Laſtly, hence 'twill follow, That we ought to perform this *Rational* Will of God with *Angelical* Alacrity and Conſtancy, partly for its own Excellency, as 'tis a purſuance of our Intereſt, and partly out of gratitude and generoſity to God, for giving us ſuch excellent Laws; in keeping of which, there is *ſo great Reward.* For not only the *End* of our Religion is Happineſs, but even her *very ways are ways of pleaſantneſs, and all her Paths are Peace. Quintilian*, I remember, inquiring why former Ages afforded better *Orators* than the later, reſolves the Problem into this, Becauſe there were then greater Encouragements and Rewards. And if great Encouragements will make good *Orators*, why ſhould they not make good *Men?* Let us then make it our daily *Endeavour*, as we do our daily *Prayer*, that this excellent Will of God may be done here on *Earth* as it is in *Heaven*; and the more we do ſo, the more we ſhall ſtill be convinc'd that it is *our Reaſonable Service.*

A Diſcourſe concerning Perſeverance in Holineſs.

1. ALL that is of any moment for the full Diſcharging of this Subject, will be abſolved in theſe Three Conſiderations. *Firſt*, That Man has one way or other ſufficient Power to Perſevere in a Courſe of Holineſs if he will; otherwiſe all Exhortations would be in *vain*. *Secondly*, That 'tis alſo impoſſible for him to Fall from a State of Holineſs; otherwiſe they would all be *ſuperfluous*. And Laſtly, By ſhewing him what vaſt Encouragements, what infinite Engagements he has to ſtand.

2. I begin with the Firſt, That Man has one way or other ſufficient Power to Perſevere in a Courſe of Holineſs if he will. Where by *Perſeverance*, I do not underſtand a continuedly uniform, equal courſe of Obedience, and ſuch as is not interrupted with the leaſt act of Sin, (for this is a Perfection not to be hoped for, under the *Diſadvantages* of *Mortality*) but only ſuch a conſtancy of Obedience as excludes all *contrary Habits*; and likewiſe all *ſuch acts* of Sin as are ſaid directly to waſt the Conſcience; thoſe I mean, which are committed againſt the clear and expreſs Dictate either of Natural Reaſon, and Supernatural Revelation. And withall (to compleat the Character) ſuch an Obedience as is attended with a ſedulous care and hearty endeavour to Correct and Subdue, even thoſe *pitti-*

able

able Infirmities, which can never be *wholly* put off in this State, but will always adhere like *Spots*, to the *brighteſt Star* in the *Firmament*. This I conceive, to be all one with that diſpoſition of Soul which with more compendiouſneſs we uſually call *Sincerity*, in oppoſition to a *perfect* and *ſinleſs* Obedience. Now that Man has ſufficient Power to Perſevere in ſuch a Courſe of Life as is here deſcribed, (not to call in the aſſiſtance of any other Argument) ſeems to me evidently demonſtrable from this ſingle Conſideration, That to be *found* in the State above mentioned is the Condition of the *New-Covenant*, upon the fulfilling of which, all our hopes of Pardon and Salvation depend. I do not ſay 'tis the indiſpenſable Condition of our Salvation, that we Perſevere *uninterruptedly* even in this State of *Evangelical Righteouſneſs* (it being poſſible for a Man after an interruption of a ſalvable State to recover into it again, as is plain from the Caſe of *David*, St. *Peter*, and many others) but that we be *found finally* in this State, *is* the Condition of our Salvation. *For if the Righteous Man turneth away from his Righteouſneſs, and committeth iniquities and Dies in them, the Righteouſneſs that he hath done ſhall not be mentioned; in the Sin that he hath ſinned ſhall he Die.* Well then, if Salvation be not to be had out of this State, then it follows, That it muſt never become impoſſible to a Man without his own Fault, to be found *in it*, ſince 'tis repugnant to the very Nature of a Covenant (much more of this great Covenant of *Mercy*) to have a Condition annex'd to it; which in *ſome* Circumſtances, and that *without our Fault*, may prove *impoſſible*.

3. The Condition then of this new Covenant, muſt be as poſſible to Man in this State of Degeneracy, now his *Locks are Shaven, and his great Strength is departed from him*, as the Condition of the firſt Covenant was to him in his Primitive Might and Vigour. *Do this and live*, is equally common to both; the only difference lies in the *This* that is to be done, not in the *poſſibility* of the *Performance*. Or if there are degrees of poſſibility, the advantage ought to lie on this ſide, this being (as was hinted before) a Covenant of *Grace* and *Mercy*.

4. Well then, If to be found finally in the State above deſcribed, be the indiſpenſable Condition of our Salvation; and if for that very reaſon (as it has been prov'd) it muſt not in any Circumſtance become impoſſible without our Fault, it unavoidably follows, That 'tis alſo poſſible to *Perſevere in it without Interruption*; becauſe otherwiſe, we having not the diſpoſal of our own Lives, it will oftentimes prove impoſſible for us (and that without our own Fault) to be found *finally* in that State which is the Condition of Salvation; which is contrary to the ſuppoſition. The ſhort is (to ſpeak all in a word) the poſſibility of being *found* in a ſalvable State cannot be ſufficiently ſecured, without a poſſibility of always *Perſevering in it*; and therefore I conclude it poſſible for a Man to do ſo; which was the thing I undertook to prove.

5. But now leſt Man upon a Survey of his Natural Strength, and of the Auxiliaries of the Divine Grace, ſhould pronounce himſelf abſolutely Impregnable, and ſhould begin to ſay in his Heart (as the

Pſalmiſt

Pſalmiſt did in another Caſe) *I ſhall never be remov'd, thou Lord of thy goodneſs haſt made my Hill ſo ſtrong*, 'tis high time to turn the *Perſpective*, and give him a more near, full, and diſtinct View of his Condition; that inſtead of *ſtretching* himſelf upon the *Bed of Security*, he may learn to Work out his Salvation with *fear and trembling*, Which we ſhall do, by advancing to the ſecond thing propoſed, which is, That although Man has ſufficient Power to Perſevere if he will, yet 'tis alſo poſſible for him to Fall from a State of Holineſs. *Navigat enim adhuc*, for he is ſtill *upon the Waters*; and tho' with the uſe of Diligence and Prudent Conduct, he may decline both *Rocks* and *Shallows*, yet if he venture to *Sleep* within the Veſſel which he ſhould *govern*, upon a groundleſs Preſumption that an *Angel* will be his *Pilot*, and that he ſhall be infallibly Steer'd to the right Point by the Arm of Omnipotence, he may, notwithſtanding the *paſt* Succeſs of his Voyage, and his *confidence* of the *future*, be Shipwreck'd even within *ſight* of the *Haven*.

6. I confeſs, When I conſider with what Strength and Combination of Argument, Chriſtianity both as to *Faith* and *Practice*, does approve it ſelf to be the moſt Rational Thing in the World, When I conſider the Nobleneſs of its *Original*, (God being its Author) the Excelleney of its *Nature*, (it being moſt agreeable to, and perfective of our beſt Faculties) its wholeſome Effects and Operations, (the Intereſts of Kingdoms and States as well as of private Perſons depending upon it) and Laſtly, the greatneſs of its *End*, which is no leſs than Everlaſting Bliſs and Happineſs; I ſay, when I conſi-

der all this, I am ready to conclude it the moſt Prodigious Thing in Nature, that ſo very *Few* ſhould be in Love with the *Beauty* of *Holineſs*, were I not immediately ſurpriſed with a *greater* Miracle, which is, That many of *thoſe few*, after ſome conſiderable Progreſs in Virtue, retract their *beſt* Choice; and after the good Angel has brought them within ſight of the *Mountain of Safety*, look back upon the Region of Wickedneſs.

7. This certainly is a Condition no leſs *ſtrange* than *deplorable*, and calls for our *Wonder* as well as our *Pity*. 'Tis true indeed, Ignorance of the Sweets of Religion may ſomething leſſen the wonder of not Embracing it, and the *Food* of *Angels* may lie neglected on the Ground ſo long, as Men *wiſt* not what it is; but for thoſe who are once *enlightned*, *and have taſted of the Heavenly Gift*, *and are made partakers of the Holy Ghoſt*, *and have taſted the good Word of God*, *and the Power of the World to come*, one would think it as *difficult* for ſuch to fall away, as the Apoſtle aſſures us 'tis, to *renew them again to Repentance*.

8. But ſuch is the imperfection and unſteddineſs of Human Nature, that from the beginning of Things there have been Inſtances of this kind. *Paradiſe* could not preſerve Man in his Innocence; and the *Garden of the Lord* degenerated into a *Wilderneſs*. Neither is this to be obſerv'd only in *Man*, who ſits in the loweſt Form of Intellectual Beings; but the very *Angels* alſo, who are greater in Power and Might, are *charged with Folly* for leaving their *own Habitation*, Job 4.18. Thoſe bright Sons of the Morning could not long *endure* to be Happy; but grew

giddy

giddy with the ſublimity of their Station, and fell from the *Heights* of Glory. And altho the Bleſſed Inhabitants of that ſerene and peaceful Manſion are now (as 'tis piouſly believed) fully confirmed in *Holineſs* and *Happineſs*, yet Man like this ſublunary Region which falls to his Lot to inherit, is ſtill nothing elſe but a Scene of Changes and Revolutions; but in nothing ſo Changeable, as in that wherein he ought to be moſt fixt, the practice of *Virtue and Religion*. 'Tis a narrow and rugged Path, and he that treads ſureſt is not ſecure from Falling.

9. This will plainly appear to him that conſiders, that no Habit, tho contracted by never ſo great a repetition of Acts, does *neceſſitate* the Faculty, but only diſpoſes it to Act with greater *facility*; and conſequently, leaves it ſtill indifferent to Oppoſite Operations. Whence 'tis eaſie to conceive, that an Habit of Holineſs may by degrees, be aboliſh'd by contrary Actions. For as this Habit was at firſt *begotten* by frequent Acts, ſo may it be *deſtroyed* by the oppoſite Ones; and (what is more) a contrary Habit may be at length produced.

10. This I ſay is very poſſible in the *ordinary* Courſe of Things; and that God ſhould interpoſe here with an *irreſiſtible* Power to prevent it, we have no grounds from *Scripture* or *Reaſon* to expect; and therefore 'twou'd be a moſt intolerable Preſumption to rely upon it. *My Grace is ſufficient for thee*, was the utmoſt degree of Conſolation vouchſafed to the *choſen Veſſel*; He had God's Faithfulneſs engaged for it, that he ſhould not be tempted above his Strength; but yet notwithſtanding this *ſufficiency*, it muſt have been poſſible for him to have fall'n from

from his *own Stedfaſtneſs*, otherwiſe I cannot imagine to what purpoſe he ſhould, ὑπωπιάζειν τὸ σῶμα, *keep under his Body, and bring it into ſubjection*; and all for this Reaſon, *Leſt that by any means when he had Preach'd to others, he himſelf ſhould be a caſt away.*

11. What, Did the *Angels* let fall their Crowns of Glory, and ſhall *Man* pretend *Indefectibility?* Indeed the *Platoniſts* tell us of an Order of Beings calld νόες, ἑνάδες and αὐτοαγαθότητες, *minds, units* and *ſelf-goodneſſes*, whom they ſuppoſe to be the cloſeſt *draught* of their Maker, and the *Maſter-piece* of the whole Creation. And theſe they ſay, are *eſſentially* and in their own Nature, *immutable*; and the Reaſon that they aſſign for it is, becauſe they are pure, uncompounded Spirits, and utterly abſtract from Matter. And altho' theſe are the only Creatures which they affirm to be *eſſentially* Immutable, yet they allow a *gift* or *priviledge* of Perſeverance to certain Men. But then they are ſuch as (according to their Hypotheſis of Pre-exiſtence) were not ſent down into theſe Bodies for any *faults* committed in another State, but who came hither either out of Generoſity, or by Divine Diſpenſation, to be guides and examples of *Heroick* Virtue in the World. And theſe they ſay, are ſecure of remaining Good and Virtuous, and of returning to their Native Country again.

12. Now as to the firſt Opinion of theirs, I can by no means make it part of my *Creed.* For to be *eſſentially* Immutable, I take to be the incommunicable Property of the Father of Lights, *with whom is no variableneſs or ſhadow of turning*; *and who is the ſame*

ſame yeſterday, to day and for ever. No Creature how excellent ſoever, can lay Claim to this Divine Prerogative. And this I find acknowledg'd by a Perſon of great Worth, and one who in other Points was very *Platonically* given; But here he has deſerted his Maſter, as is to be ſeen in his Book περὶ ἀρχῶν, Lib. 1. c. 8. And the generality of Chriſtian Writers ſeem to conſpire with *Origen* in this, inaſmuch as they hold not only a Lapſe of Angels in *general*, but withal, ſuppoſe him who is *now* the *Prince of Devils*, to have been *once* an Angel of the *higheſt* Order.

13. As to their later Opinion (not to meddle with the *Hypotheſis* upon which 'tis founded) I do not abſolutely deny, but that to ſome Men who have for a long time given excellent proof of their Obedience, and with unwearied Reſolution Fought the Lord's Battels, God may at length vouchſafe ſuch a plentiful Portion of Grace, and ſo ſtabliſh them with his *Free Spirit*, that they ſhall never depart from him, partly to Reward their *paſt Fidelity*, and partly, that they may become *burning Lamps*, to give *conſtant* Light in the *Temple* of God. For ſince 'tis confeſs'd on all Hands, That God by way of *Puniſhment* does withdraw his Grace from ſome *obſtinate* Sinners, and give them up after a long Abuſe of his Mercy, to the fulfilling of their own Luſts, 'tis but what the Analogy of Reaſon requires, to ſuppoſe on the other Hand, that God may be ſo favourable to ſome of his moſt eminent Servants, who have for a long time well acquitted themſelves in the ſevereſt trials, as at length *to give his Angels a peculiar charge over them, to keep them in all their ways.*

ways. And this ſuppoſition ſeems not a little countenanc'd from what the Spirit ſays to the Church of *Philadelphia*, *Becauſe thou haſt kept the word of my Patience, I alſo will keep thee from the hour of Temptation, which ſhall come upon all the World, to try them that dwell upon the Earth*, Rev. 3. 10.

14. But altho' this be granted, yet it makes nothing againſt our preſent Aſſertion, as every one muſt acknowledge that attends to theſe two Conſiderations. *1ſt*, That theſe are *extraordinary* Inſtances of the Divine Favour, vouchſafed only to *extraordinary Perſons*, and to *extraordinary purpoſes*; and conſequently, when we treat of God's *ordinary* Dealings with the Sons of Men, muſt not come into Computation. And Secondly, That even theſe extraordinary Perſons whom we ſuppoſe to be at length thus *highly favour'd*, were notwithſtanding for a great Part of their Lives, in a *defectible* Condition; and that they are now no longer ſo, is ſuppoſed to be the *reward* of their *paſt Fidelity*; ſo that they may ſay with the *Pſalmiſt*, *this I had becauſe kept thy Commandments*, Pſal. 119.

15. What hinders then, but that it be concluded Poſſible for the *generality* of Men at *all* times, and for *all* Men at ſome times, to fall from a State of Holineſs; and after they have taſted the *Liberty of the Sons of God*, to become again the *Servants of Corruption?* And ſure thoſe that Aſſert the contrary, deſtroy not only the Excellency, but the Nature of Obedience, defeat and evacuate the Deſign of all Scripture Exhortation; which would be as impertinent upon their Suppoſition, as to exhort him to *continue* to Live who is *Immortal*, pervert the Order

Order of Things, arrogating to themſelves in this State of *Probation*, the Portion of *confirm'd* Saints: And Laſtly, Aſſume to themſelves more, than many of the great Maſters of Theology will allow to our Bleſſed Saviour himſelf in the Days of his Fleſh. Did our Saviour ſeem to *ſhrink* at the Apprehenſion of his ſad Hour, and to be at a *ſtand* whether he ſhould drink off his bitter Cup? Did his Danger ſeem ſo conſiderable, that he was fain to betake himſelf to his great *Antidote Prayer*, and *borrow* Courage from the Conſolation of an Angel? And does *mere* Man ſit careleſs and unconcern'd, ſecure of the Iſſues of Eternity? See the *indecorum*, the Lord is in his Agony, and the Diſciples *Sleep on, and take their Reſt*. But I think I have ſaid enough to awaken them out of their dangerous Slumber; and to convince them, that all is not ſo ſafe as they *Dream*; and that notwithſtanding the preſent firmneſs of their Station, there is ſtill left a poſſibility of Falling.

16. But now leſt this poſſibility of Falling be reduced to act, I proceed to conſider the vaſt Encouragements, the infinite Engagements that he who is Holy has, to be Holy ſtill. And theſe I ſhall chuſe to repreſent to him in theſe two general Conſiderations. Firſt, That he has made the *beſt* Choice that he could poſſibly have made; and conſequently, 'tis againſt all the Reaſon in the World that he ſhould *reſcind* it. Secondly, That if notwithſtanding he does reſcind it, he will not only loſe the *advantage* of his beſt Chice, but incur an oppoſite Portion of Miſery; and that in a *greater Meaſure* than *other ſinners*. Theſe I take to be the moſt proper Con-

Conſiderations to inforce the grand Duty of Perſeverance.

17. The Conſequence of the firſt Argument proceeds upon this Principle, That that Choice which is beſt, is not to be reſcinded. This Propoſition is ſo evident, that it can hardly *admit*, much leſs *need* any Proof; and 'tis practically confeſs'd by every Man throughout the whole tenour of his Life. For no Man retracts his Choice, 'till he has alter'd the Dictate of his Underſtanding, (for otherwiſe he would chuſe Evil under the very Formality of Evil) and has entertain'd other apprehenſions of the Object, than he had when he firſt choſe it. And this is that which makes up the entire Notion of *Repentance*, which is nothing elſe in its *preciſe Idea*, when abſtracted from *particular* Matter, but a *Retractation* of a former Choice, proceeding from the alteration of the Practical Dictate, diſallowing that now, which was before approv'd. For this a Man never does, till he thinks he has reaſon to do ſo. And upon this account 'tis, that God is ἀμεταμέλητος, and cannot properly *Repent*, becauſe his Underſtanding being Infinite, and reaching out to all the poſſibilities of Things, muſt needs dictate to his Will after *one uniform* and conſtant manner; it being impoſſible he ſhould either Diſcover ſomething *afterward* which he did not Comprehend at *firſt*, or *loſe* the Apprehenſion of ſomething which he *did*. But the Underſtanding of Man being finite and imperfect at the beſt, and oftentimes corrupted and byaſs'd by the Paſſions, has at ſeveral times different Apprehenſions of Things; and being ſometimes *under*, and ſometimes *out of the Cloud*, dictates to the Will

Will as the Sun ſhines upon the Earth, with a *diſuniform* and *unequal* Light. Whereupon (as it frequently happens in Courts and Senates) many Decrees are Enacted, which at the next *Seſſion* are Repealed again; tho with this unhappineſs, that ſometimes her ſecond Thoughts are worſe than her firſt; and that ſhe ſometimes Retracts that which ſhe ſhould Perſevere in, as well as Perſeveres in that which ſhe ſhould Retract. But whatever the Retractation really be, 'twas always thought for the beſt when made; ſo that he that Repents him of his *Holineſs*, as well as he that repents him of his *Sin*, does it upon the Change of his Practical Dictate, judging that not to be beſt now, which before was ſo pronounc'd, that conſequently, they both own the Truth of the foremention'd Principle, That that Choice which is beſt, is not to be reſcinded.

18. This being firm, all the buſineſs in queſtion now will be, Whether he that is Holy has made the beſt Choice or no. And if it ſhall appear that he has, then by the Principle juſt now laid down, he ought not, nay, he cannot be ſo much a *Contradiction* to himſelf, as to reſcind it. Now to convince him that he has made the beſt Choice, I deſire him to conſider, *Firſt*, That he has choſen that which God had choſen for him before; ſo that his Choice ſtands recommended to him by the *Authority* of infinite and unerring Wiſdom. And this is Foundation enough to warrant a *certain* (tho' *implicit*) Perſwaſion, that it muſt needs be beſt for him. I ſay beſt for *him*, for God being already poſſeſs'd of all poſſible Perfection, cannot Act any thing

thing for any *ſelf-advantage*; and therefore whatſoever he does is for the good of his *Creatures*. For there is this difference (as *Divine Plato* excellently well obſerves) between the *Divine* Love and *Created* Love, that the one ſprings from *Indigency*, and the other from *Fulneſs* and *Redundancy*. And therefore as God did not at firſt ſpeak this World into Being, to raiſe himſelf a Monument of *Power* and Divine *Architecture*, ſo neither does he govern the *Rational* part of it by the Precepts of Religion, out of any *Self-deſign*, as if he feaſted his Noſtrils with the Perfumes of the Altar, or his Ears with the Accents of an Hallelujah. *For can a Man be profitable to God, as he that is wiſe may be profitable to himſelf? Is it any Pleaſure to the Almighty that thou art Righteous? Or is it gain to him that thou makeſt thy way perfect?* Job 22. No certainly; and therefore when he Chalk'd out the Ways of Righteouſneſs and Holineſs for Man to Walk in, it could not be for any *Self-end*, but purely for the good of *Man*, and conſequently (if infinite Wiſdom be to be truſted) it muſt be his beſt Choice to be *Holy*.

19. Secondly, let him conſider, That the Practice of Religion conſults a Man's *whole* Intereſt; and partly of its own Nature, and partly by Divine Conſtitution, tends to make him Happy in *all* his Capacities; and conſequently muſt needs be his *beſt* Choice. As for impious and unjuſt Practices, if they do at any time promote a Man's *private* and *ſecular* Intereſt, yet 'tis always both at the expence of the *Public*, and of his own *Eternal* Welfare; and then, *What will it profit a Man to gain the whole World,*

World, and loſe his own Soul? But now this is the peculiar *gain* of *Godlineſs*, that it has the promiſe both of this Life, and of that which is to come; that it conduces to our Advantage, both *here* and *hereafter*. *Intereſt* and *Duty*, are immediately link'd together in this Life; and every Virtue has a *Natural Sanction* of Reward and Puniſhment reſpectively attending it, as I could eaſily demonſtrate, but that it has been already done by many excellent Hands, and particularly with *Mathematic* evidence by a late Writer of our own. *Dr. Cumberland.* And altho it happen ſometimes through the unreaſonableneſs and injuſtice of Men, that Duty and Intereſt *interfere*, and that Virtue be defeated of the Portion ſhe is *naturally* endow'd with, yet ſhe ſhall recover her own again at the great Aſſize, at the *Day of the Revelation of the Righteous Judgments of God.* And altho' inſtead of being *rewarded*, it be our fortune to *ſuffer* for Righteouſneſs ſake, yet we Chriſtians know, that it intitles us to one of our Saviours *Beatitudes*; and we are alſo well aſſured from one, whoſe Caſe it was to be ſo dealt with, That *the ſufferings of the preſent time are not worthy to be compared with the Glory that ſhall be revealed*; and that *our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us* καθ' ὑπερβολὴν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν αἰώνιον βάρος δόξης, *a far more exceeding and Eternal weight of Glory.* So that whatever Difficulties and Hardſhips Religion may ſometimes engage a Man in, yet when the whole Account is caſt up, he will find the *Practice* of Religion as *gainful*, as the *Belief* of it is *rational*; that to be Holy is his beſt Choice; and that he has infinite rea-

ſon to pray in the words of *Balaam*, *Let me die the Death of the Righteous, and let my laſt end be like his.*

20. And now one would think, that one who has ſo great and ſo apparent reaſon for his Choice, as the Religious Man has, ſhould not eaſily be brought to Retract it, and ſay with thoſe in *Malachi*, *It is vain to ſerve God; and what profit is it that I have kept his Ordinances?* But becauſe 'tis obſerv'd to be the Nature of Man to be more ſtrongly affected with *Puniſhments* than *Rewards*, I ſhall for his better Eſtabliſhment in the purpoſes of Holineſs, preſent him with the ſecond general Conſideration, which is, That if notwithſtand the excellency of his Choice, he does Retract it, he will not only loſe the *Advantages* of it, but alſo incur an *oppoſite portion of Miſery*; and that in *greater* Meaſures than other Sinners.

21. That he will loſe the Advantages of his firſt and beſt Choice, is plain from the whole Tenour of the Goſpel, Perſeverance to the End, being the expreſs Condition of Salvation. And that he will incur an oppoſite Portion of Miſery, is plain from the double Sanction of Rewards and Puniſhments, wherewith God has bound us to the obſervance of his otherwiſe ſufficiently profitable Laws. And altho this be ſufficient in the ſevereſt Trials, to preſerve us from *Apoſtaſie*; and when Flames of Fire ſurround us, to ſecure our Footing in the *Holy Ground*, yet thus far is but to Dye the *common Death of Sinners, and to be viſited after the Viſitation of the Impenitent. But now if the Lord make a new thing*, and the Deſerter of Piety be puniſh'd in a greater meaſure

meaſure than other Sinners, *then ſhall ye underſtand that this Man has provoked the Lord.*

22. And that he ſhall be ſo puniſh'd, is the peculiar Conſideration which I ſhall now inſiſt upon; and which I prove from the *heinouſneſs* of his Crime, *Apoſtaſie* having in it many Degrees of Evil beyond the *common* State of Sin. *For if after they have eſcaped the Pollutions of the World through thy knowledg of the Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the later end is worſe with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of Righteouſneſs, than after they have known it, to turn from the Holy Commandment deliver'd unto them.*

23. But to repreſent the heinouſneſs of Apoſtaſie a little more particularly; and that this Sin above all others, may appear to be *exceeding ſinful*, let me deſire the unthinking Man to Conſider, *Firſt*, That he that falls back from a Courſe of Holy Living, does in a ſpecial manner grieve the Holy Spirit of God. He *ſacrilegiouſly* takes that from him, which he had once moſt ſolemnly *Conſecrated* to his Service; he defiles the Seat of his Reſidence, alienates it to profane uſes, blots out the *Tetragrammaton* of the Temple, and ſuffers it to be no longer *Holineſs to the Lord.* He diſinherits his God, diſturbs his Reſt, and forces him to leave the Habitation whereof he had once ſaid, *This ſhall be my reſt for ever, here will I dwell, for I have a delight therein.* Add to this Affront of the Holy Spirit that reſided in him, That he grieves the Angels that attended him, and with much much *concern* and *hopes*, miniſter'd to his Salvation. Thoſe *diſ-*

appointed and *unſucceſsful Guardians*, with Sorrow cry out to one another, as the Angels did in the *Jewiſh Temple*, when through many Profanations it was no longer fit for their Charge, Μεταβαίνωμεν ἐντεῦθεν, let us depart hence. Neither does he diſappoint the Tutelar Miniſters of his Salvation only, but cauſes *univerſal* Grief in in Heaven. Thoſe kind and compaſſionate Spirits, who before rejoyc'd at his *Repentance and Converſion*, and began to reckon upon the *new acceſſion* they ſhould have to the *Quire* of Heaven, now Tune their *Harps* to the *ſtrains of Sorrow*, and lament the diſappointment of their Hopes.

Joſephus de Bell. Jud. lib. 7.

24. Conſider Secondly, That to the Sin of Apoſtaſie is added the Circumſtance of *inexcuſableneſs*. The Man has enter'd within the *Veil*, has ſeen the inner Beauties of the Holy Place, and has been taught the *Secrets* of the Kingdom; his Underſtanding has been inſtructed, and his Will has been entertain'd; he has given Proof of his Powers and Abilities, and has Conquer'd the *ſteepeſt* Part of the *Mount*; his difficulties leſſen, and his ſtrength increaſes; ſo that if now he retreat, and ſlide back to the *bottom* of the Hill, he has nothing whereby to excuſe himſelf, either before God or Man; but ſtands in the higheſt Senſe of the Phraſe, Αὐτοκατάκριτος, *ſelf condemn'd*. We generally make ſome allowances for the Miſcarriages of thoſe who were never *enlightned*, and have had no Acquaintance with the ſubſtantial delights of Religion, and the Satisfaction of ſober Counſels, becauſe indeed they *knew no better*; but when we are told, that the *wiſeſt of Men*, after a *cenſure of Vanity*, paſs'd upon the

the *whole Creation*, and a long application of his Mind to the excellent Theories of *Moral* and *Divine* Knowledge, was yet towards the *Evening* of his Life, when the Sun drove hard, and the *ſhadows encreas'd*, drawn aſide by ſtrange Women; and that his Wiſdom departed from him like the *Dream* wherein it was given him, this indeed we may *Lament*, but cannot *Excuſe*.

25. Conſider Thirdly, That he who falls from a State of Holineſs, muſt needs do ſtrange Violence to his *Reaſon*. If he be a *new Convert*, he cannot ſure without great reluctancy, defile that Temple which he has ſo lately *ſwept* and *garniſh'd*. And if he be a Saint of ſome *conſiderable ſtanding*, ſure he muſt be the more unwilling to break off a *long-dated* Innocence, for the unſatisfying Pleaſure of a Moment. For tho' (as 'tis well obſerved by *Plutarch*) Men of deſperate and Bankrupt Fortunes have little regard to their expences, becauſe ſhould they ſave them, the Tide of their Eſtates wont riſe much the higher; and ſo they think it impertinent to be *Frugal*, when there's no hopes of being *Rich*. Yet they that ſee their Heaps begin to Swell, and that they are within the *Neighbourhood* of Wealth, think it worth while to be ſaving, and improve their growing Stock. But then after a long Thrift and Sparing, to throw away the hard purchaſe of many Years in one *Nights Gaming*, is one of the Prodigies of Folly and Indiſcretion. And yet this is the very Caſe of him that lets go his Integrity.

26. Conſider Fourthly and Laſtly, That the Apoſtate has the greateſt *ingratitude* imaginable to

aggravate his Folly. Indeed, every Sinner is a very ungrateful Perſon, becauſe he Treſpaſſes againſt his *beſt Friend and Benefactor*, againſt him that Made him, againſt him that Died for him, and againſt him that Follows him with the daily offers of his Grace; and lays *ſtratagems of Mercy* for his Reformation. But the *Back-ſliding* Man ſins againſt greater Mercies, Endearments and Obligations yet. He has liv'd in the Service of his Lord, has receiv'd the Earneſt of his Spirit, he has been of his Family; nay more, he has been call'd his *Friend*, he has Eaten with him at his Table, he has dwelt under the Endearments of Familiar Converſe, he has been with him in his *Banqueting Houſe*, where *the Banner that was over him was Love*, he has plighted his Faith, given his Heart, and ſaid with Paſſion, *My Beloved is mine, and I am his*; ſo that to turn *Renegade* now, is the greateſt Baſeneſs and Ingratitude conceiveable; 'tis to Betray his Lord and Maſter after the Obligations of Intimacy and *Diſcipleſhip*; 'tis to break the Tables of his Law, after he has been with him on the Mount, and ſeen the *back parts* of his Glory.

27. Since therefore the Apoſtate has ſo many peculiar Circumſtances to aggravate his Crime beyond the guilt of Common Sinners, *of how much ſorer Puniſhment ſuppoſe ye ſhall he be thought worthy, who has thus trodden under Foot the Son of God; and has counted the Blood of the Covenant wherewith he was Sanctified, an unholy thing; and has done deſpite to the Spirit of Grace?* which was the laſt general Conſideration.

28. What

28. What now remains, but that upon a ſerious Conſideration of the Premiſes, He that is Holy, think himſelf highly concern'd to be Holy ſtill. *That he lift up the Hands that hang down, and ſtrengthen the feeble Knees* ; that he *hold faſt that which he has, that no man takes his Crown* ; that he *unravel* not his Holy Vows, nor put himſelf *back* in the Accounts of Eternity ; that he be not frighted or laught out of his Religion, ſince 'tis his beſt and wiſeſt Choice, and will be found to be ſo in ſpite of all the profane Drollery of *ſuppoſed* Wits, in the day when *Wiſdom ſhall be juſtified of all her Children. For then ſhall the Righteous Man ſtand in great boldneſs before the Face of ſuch as have afflicted him, and made no account of his Labours. And they ſhall ſay within themſelves, this was he whom we had ſometimes in deriſion, and a proverb of reproach ; we fools counted his Life madneſs, and his End to be without honour. How is he numbred among the Children of God, and his lot is among the Saints !* Wherefore again, let him that is Holy, be Holy ſtill. Let him but maintain his Station during his *ſhort warfare* here on Earth, and he ſhall be hereafter confirm'd both in Holineſs and Happineſs ; and be fix'd in that Center where he ſhall for ever reſt. For ſo ſays the Spirit to the Churches, *Him that overcometh will I make a Pillar in the Temple of my God, and he ſhall go no more out*, Rev. 3. 12.

A Diſcourſe concerning Heroic Piety; Wherein its Notion is Stated, and its Practice Recommended.

1. SInce the Practice of Religion in general, is not only the *Natural Inſtrument* of our *preſent* Happineſs, but alſo the only and indiſpenſable *Condition* of our *Future*, one would think there were but little left for the Orator to do here; the naked Efficacy of Self-love, and a ſerious Conſideration of our true and main Intereſt, being ſufficient to engage us upon Religious Performances. But he that ſhall undertake to recommend the Practice of *Heroic Piety*, has a much heavier task, not only becauſe he perſwades to higher Degrees of Virtue, but becauſe he is to addreſs himſelf wholly to a weaker Principle. For ſince our Intereſt is ſecured by the Performance of neceſſary Duty, there remains nothing but a Principle of *Generoſity* to carry us on to the higher *Advances*, the more glorious *Atchievements* in Religion. And what ſmall probability there is that it will often do ſo, may appear from the ill ſucceſs of the former and more prevailing Principle. For if the greateſt Intereſt imaginable can prevail with ſo very few to perform what is indiſpenſably neceſſary to ſecure it, ſure there is little hopes that *Generoſity*, which is a much weaker Principle, ſhould Engage many upon *greater* Performances.

2. But

2. But yet, notwithſtanding theſe Diſcouragements, ſince our Bleſſed Saviour has taught us to Pray, not only for the Performance of God's will in *general*, but that it be *done one Earth as it is in Heaven*; that is, with the greateſt Zeal, Readineſs and Alacrity, with all the degrees of *Seraphic* Ardency that frail Mortality is capable of, I think a *Perſwaſive* to *Heroic Piety* may be a proper and uſeful Undertaking; it being very reaſonable we ſhould make that the Object of our *Endeavours*, which our Saviour thought fit to make the matter of our *Prayers*.

3. In diſcourſing upon this Subject, I ſhall proceed in this Method. 1. I ſhall ſtate the Notion of *Heroic Piety*, and ſhew what I mean by it. 2. I ſhall demonſtrate that there is ſuch a Thing. And 3. I ſhall offer ſome *Perſwaſives* to recommend the Practice of it.

4. The Notion of *Heroic* Piety will be beſt underſtood by conſidering what the Moraliſts mean by *Heroic* Virtue. For the one carries the ſame Proportion in *Religion*, that the other does in *Morality*. But before I proceed to explain the *Thing*, I ſuppoſe it will not be amiſs to give ſome ſhort Account of the *Name*. That it is derived from the *Greek* word Ἥρως, is very obvious, all the difficulty is concerning the derivation of the *Greek* word it ſelf. And here I find the Grammarians are very much divided; ſome derive it ἀπὸ τῆ ἀρετῆς, but that ſeems ſomewhat hard; others derive it from ἀὴρ, becauſe 'twas ſuppoſed by the Ancients that the Souls of the *Heroes* had their Abode in the Air, where they had a near Proſpect of Human Affairs; and

and accordingly *Xenon* in *Laertius*, *lib.* 7. calls *Heroes* the Souls of Wise Men separated from their Bodies, and ranging about in the Air: Others derive it from Ἔρα, because the Heroes are a kind of *Terrestrial* Gods, according to that definition which *Lucian* gives of an *Hero*, ὃς μήτε θεὸς μήτε ἄνθρωπος ἀλλὰ συναμφότερον, one that is neither God nor Man, but a compound of both. Others derive it from Ἥρα, the Name of *Juno*, who was the President Goddess of the Air, intimating thereby, either the Habitation, or the Light Æreal Nature of the *Heroes*. And this Etymology I remember is approv'd of by St. *Austin*, *lib.* 10. *de Civ. Dei*, *cap.* 21. But methinks the most natural and significant one is that of *Plato*, who derives it from Ἔρως, because of that ardent and passionate Love which the *Heroes* are supposed to have for God. And as the word *Hero* is very doubtful as to its Etymology, so is it also various in its Acceptation. Sometimes it is attributed to illustrious and eminent Personages while *living*, such as act and live above the ordinary strain of Mortality, and render it a very disputable Point, whether they are Gods or Men. A Character which *Homer* gives of the great *Hector*, *Iliad* ω.

——Ὃς θεὸς ἔσχε μετ' ἀνδράσιν οὐδὲ ἐῴκει
Ανδρός γε θνητοῦ παῖς ἔμμεναι, ἀλλὰ θεοῖο.

And in this Sense the word *Hero* is used by *Hesiod*

Ανδρῶν Ἡρώων θεῖον γένος, οἱ καλέονται
Ἡμίθεοι——

Sometimes by Heroes are meant the Souls of wise and good Men departed, as is evident from the fore-cited Testimony in *Laertius*. But in the *Platonic*

tonic Philoſophy, by *Heroes* is underſtood a middle ſort of Being, inferiour to thoſe whom they ſtile the *Immortal Gods*, and ſuperiour to Man; as is to be ſeen at large in *Hierocles*.

5. Beyond theſe three Acceptations of the word, I do not know of any other. But this is certain, that in whatſoever ſenſe it is uſed, it always denotes ſomething great and extraordinary. So that from hence, 'tis eaſie to collect what is meant by *Heroic Virtue*, *(viz.)* Such a vehement and intenſe Purſuance of a Man's laſt and beſt End, as engages him upon ſuch excellent and highly commendable Actions, which advance him much above the ordinary level of Human Nature; and which he might wholly omit, and yet ſtill maintain the Character of a good Man. *Ariſtotle* in his *Ethics l.* 7. *c.* 1. calls it ϑ ὑπὲρ ἡμᾶς ἀρετὴν, that Virtue that is above us. By which I ſuppoſe, he does not mean that it is above our reach, and unattainable, but that it is above our obligation; and that when it is attain'd, it will elevate us above our ſelves.

6. In proportion to this Notion of Heroic Virtue, I underſtand by *Heroic Piety* thoſe excellent degrees and eminences of Religion, which, tho to arrive at be extremely laudable, yet we may fall ſhort of them without Sin, God having not bound them upon us as parts of *Duty*, or made them the *Conditions* of our Salvation, but only recommended them by way of *Counſel*, and left them as Inſtances of *Generoſity*. Of this ſort are thoſe high and ſingular Exerciſes of Religion which are the fruits and effects of a profound and ſteddy Contemplation of God: Such as are the paſſionate Applications

plications of *Seraphic* Love, Acts of ecſtatic Joy and Complacency in the Perfections of the Divine Nature, holy Tranſports of Zeal and Devotion, Praiſe and Adoration; earneſt, contentious, and very numerous Returns of Prayer, actual references of our moſt natural and indifferent Actions to God's Glory, extraordinary works of Charity, great ſeverities of Mortification and Self-denyal, abſtemiouſneſs from any Lawful Pleaſures, perpetual *Celebacy*; and whatſoever elſe are the excellent products of a *contemplative* and *affectionate* Religion.

7. Thus far of the Notion of *Heroic Piety*. I come now to my ſecond Undertaking, which was to ſhew, that there is ſuch a Thing. Tho' univerſality and ſincerity of Obedience be indiſpenſably required of every Chriſtian, and conſequently every part of Religion obliges under the penalty of Damnation as to its *kind*, yet that there may be ſome *degrees*, to the Attainment of which we are not ſo obliged, will evidently appear from the proof of this one ſingle Propoſition, That every one is not bound to do what is beſt. The reaſonableneſs of which Propoſition. appears from the very Nature of the Thing; for ſince that which is *Beſt* is a *Superlative*, it neceſſarily ſuppoſes the *Poſitive* to be good: And if ſo, then we are not bound to that which is *Beſt*; for if we were, then that which is *only good* would be *evil*, (it being ſhort of what we are bound to) which is contrary to the Suppoſition.

8. This Argument I take to be *Demonſtrative*, and therefore 'twould be a kind of *Supererrogation* in me to alledge any more. But however, for the clearer Eviction and ſtronger Confirmation of this Aſſertion,

Assertion, I farther consider, That the Scripture consists of *Counsels* as well as *Commands*, *Matt.* 19. 20. and 21. 1 *Cor.* 7. 1, 6, 7, 25, 38. 2 *Cor.* 8. 10. and 9. 6. Now if some Things are matter of Counsel only, 'tis obvious to conclude two things. 1. From their being *counsell'd*, that they are good (nothing being matter of Counsel but what is so;) and Secondly, from their being only councell'd, that they do not Oblige; and consequently, that there are some degrees of Good that we are not obliged to.

9. It is farther observable, that in Scripture there is mention made of a threefold Will of God, *Rom.* 12. 2. τὸ θέλημα τὸ ἀγαθὸν, καὶ εὐάρεστον καὶ τέλειον, *That Will which is good, that which is well-pleasing, and that which is perfect.* The first of these denotes absolute *Duty*, the two last the various degrees of *Perfection* and *Heroic* Excellence. Thus for St. *Paul* to Preach the Gospel to the *Corinthians*, was an Act of strict Duty which he could not leave undone, without incurring that Woe which he annexes to the omission of it, 1 *Cor.* 9. 16. τόδε ἀδαπάνως κηρύσσειν προαιρέσεως φιλοτιμία, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο καύχημά ἐστι. *But to preach without charging them was an instance of Generosity, and in that respect there was room for boasting.* Thus again, for a *Jew* to allot the tenth part of his Revenue every third year toward the Relief of the Poor, was an act of express Duty; and in doing of that, he would but satisfie the Obligation of the Law: But now if in his charitable Contributions he should exceed that proportion; according to the degrees of the excess, so would the degrees of his Perfection be. Thus again in the matter of *Devotion*,

Theophylact.

tion, Daily Prayer is generally concluded to be a *Duty*; and by ſome *Criticks*, that it be *twice* perform'd, in proportion to the Returns of the Jewiſh Sacrifices, Morning and Evening: But now if a more generouſly diſpoſed Chriſtian ſhould add a *third* time, or out of *abundance* of Zeal ſhould come up to the *Pſalmiſt*'s reſolution of *(Seven times a day will I praiſe thee)* this would be a *free-will* Offering, *well pleaſing* and of *ſweet ſavour*, but not *Commanded*.

10. From theſe and many other Inſtances, which, if neceſſary, I could eaſily produce, it plainly appears that Religion does not conſiſt in an *indiviſible point*, but has a *Latitude*, and is capable of *more* and *leſs*; and conſequently, there is room for *voluntary Oblations*, and Acts of *Heroic Piety*.

11. I know it is uſually objected here, That what is ſuppoſed to be thus *Heroically* perform'd, is *incluſively* enjoyn'd by virtue of thoſe comprehenſive words, *(Thou ſhalt Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy Soul, &c.)* But, I conceive, that all which is intended by that Phraſe, will amount to no more than, Firſt, A *ſincere* Love of God, as 'tis oppoſed to that which is *partial* and *divided*; and ſecondly, Such a degree of loving him, as admits of nothing into *Competition* with him. And thus far reach the *Boundaries* of Indiſpenſable Duty; it being impoſſible, that he who does not love God in this *ſenſe* and *degree*, ſhould keep his Commandments. But beyond this, there are higher degrees, which, becauſe we may fall ſhort of without Sin, are the more excellent when attain'd. So that in this Precept of loving God, as in all other Inſtances of Religion, there is a great latitude; it being

being very poſſible for two Perſons to love God *ſincerely*, and with their *whole Soul*, and yet in different Meaſures (which is obſerv'd even among the Angels, the *Seraphins* having their Name from their *exceſs of Love* (nay, for the ſame Perſon always to love God *ſincerely*, and yet at ſome times to exceed himſelf; and with his Saviour (who to be ſure never fail'd of *neceſſary Duty*) *to pray yet more earneſtly*.

12. There is another Objection yet behind, which I think my ſelf concern'd to Anſwer, as well in my *own* Defence, as that of my *Argument*. Some perhaps may be ſo weak to imagine, that by aſſerting ſuch a Thing as *Heroic Piety*, and that a Chriſtian may do *more* than he is Commanded, I too much favour the Doctrin of *Supererogation*. But I conſider, *for a Man to do more than he is Commanded*, is an ambiguous expreſſion, and may denote either that he can perform the *whole* Law of God and *more*, or that, 'tho he fail of his Duty in many Inſtances, and conſequently with the reſt of Mankind, *is concluded under ſin*; Yet in ſome others he may exceed it, by *preſſing forward* to ſome degrees of Excellency he is not obliged to. I do not Aſſert the *former* of theſe, but the *later*. And I think I have ſufficiently proved, that there are certain degrees in *Religion*, which we are not obliged to under Pain of Sin; and conſequently, that he who arrives ſo far, does (according to the *later* notion of the *Phraſe*) do *more than he is Commanded*.

13. Having in the foregoing *Periods* ſtated the Notion of *Heroic Piety*, and demonſtrated that there is ſuch a Thing, I proceed now to my third and laſt

laſt undertaking, which was to offer ſome Perſwaſives to recommend the Practice of it. Firſt then, I conſider that Religion is the Perfection of a Man, the Improvement and Accompliſhment of that Part of him wherein he reſembles his Maker, the Purſuance of his beſt and laſt End, and conſequently his *Happineſs*. And will a Man ſet *Bounds* to his *Happineſs*? Will he be no more Happy than he is *Commanded*, no more than what will juſt ſerve to ſecure him from a *miſerable* Eternity? Is not Happineſs deſirable for it *ſelf*, as well as for the avoiding of *Miſery*? Why then do we deal with it as with *dangerous Phyſic*, weighing it by Grains and Scruples, and nice Proportions? Why do we drink ſo *moderately* of the *River* of *Paradiſe*, ſo *ſparingly* of the *Well* of *Life*? Are we afraid of making too nigh Advances to the State of Angels, of becoming *too* like God, of *antedating* Heaven? Are we afraid our Happineſs will flow in too *thick* upon us, that we ſhall not bear up againſt the Tide, but ſink under the too *powerful* Enjoyment? Hereafter indeed, when we are bleſt with the *Beatific Viſion*, and the Glories of the Divine Brightneſs ſhall flaſh too *ſtrong* upon our Souls, ſo that our Happineſs begins to be *leſſen'd* by its *greatneſs*; We may then, with the Angels that attend the Throne, *veil* our Faces, and *divert* ſome of the too *exuberant* Bleſſedneſs: But now in this *Region*, we are far enough from being *under* the *Line*; there is no danger of ſuch *Extremity*, but rather the contrary; and therefore it would be now moſt adviſable for us to be as *Happy*, and to that End, as *Religious* as we can.

14. Secondly,

14. Secondly, I conſider, That ſince God, out of the abundance of his *overflowing* and *communicative* Goodneſs, was pleas'd to create and deſign Man for the beſt of Ends, the fruition of himſelf in endleſs Happineſs; and ſince he has preſcribed no other Conditions for the Attainment of this Happineſs, but that we would live happily here in this State of Probation, having made nothing our Duty but what would have been beſt for us to do whether he had Commanded it or no; and has thereby declared, that he is ſo far only pleas'd with our Services to *him*, as they are Beneficial to *our ſelves*; this muſt needs be a moſt endearing Engagement to one that has the leaſt ſpark of Generoſity or Ingenuity, to do ſomething for the ſake of ſo *good* a God, beyond the Meaſures of Neceſſity, and the Regards of his main and final Intereſt. This is *the only Tribute* of Gratitude we are capable of paying God, for giving us ſuch good, ſuch reaſonable, and righteous Laws. Had the Conditions of our Eternal Welfare been never ſo hard, arbitrary, and contradictory to our preſent Happineſs, yet mere Intereſt would engage us to perform *neceſſary Duty*; and ſhall we do no more out of a Principle of *Love* to our excellent Lawgiver, for making our *preſent Happineſs* the *Condition* of our *future?* Shall the *Love* of *God* conſtrain us to do no more than what we would do *merely* for the *Love* of *our ſelves?* Shall we ſtint our Performances to him, who ſets no Meaſures to his Love of us? Can our Generoſity be ever more ſeaſonably employ'd, than in endeavouring to pleaſe him in *extraordinary* Meaſures, whoſe *Pleaſure* is to ſee us *Happy*, even

while we *pleaſe* him? For ſo is the Will of the wiſe and good Governour of the World, that in ſerving *him* we ſhould ſerve *our ſelves*; and like *Adam* in his dreſſing and cultivation of Paradiſe, at the ſame time diſcharge the Employment which God ſets us about, and conſult our *own* Convenience: So that it fares with us in our Religious Exerciſes, as with the Votary that Sacrifices at the Altar, who all the while he *pleaſes* and ſerves his *God*, *enjoys* the *Perfumes* of his *own Incenſe*.

15. Thirdly, I conſider, That every Man has a reſtleſs Principle of Love implanted in his Nature, a certain *Magnetiſm* of Paſſion, whereby (according to the *Platonic* and true Notion of Love) he continually aſpires to ſomething more Excellent than himſelf, either really or apparently, with a deſign and inclination to perfect his Being. This affection and diſpoſition of Mind *all* Men have, and at *all* times. Our other Paſſions ebb and flow like the Tide, have their Seaſons and Periods like *intermitting Fevers*. But this of Love, is as conſtant as our *Radical* Heat, as inſeparable as *Thought*, as even and equal as the Motions of Time. For no Man does or can, deſire to be happy more at one time than at another; becauſe he deſires it always in the higheſt degree *poſſible*. 'Tis true, his Love, as to particular Objects, may increaſe or decreaſe, according to the various Apprehenſions he has of their Excellencies; but then, like *Motion* in the Univerſe, what it loſes in one part, it gains in another; ſo that in the whole it remains always alike, and the ſame. Now this *Amorous* Principle, which every man receives with his Soul, and which is breath'd into

into him with the breath of Life, muſt neceſſarily have an Object about which it may exerciſe it ſelf, there being no ſuch thing in *Love* (if in *Nature*) as an *Element* of *Self-ſufficient* Fire. For tho' we may eaſily and truly frame an abſtract Notion of Love or Deſire in *general*, yet if we reſpect its *real* Exiſtence, we ſhall as ſoon find *Firſt Matter* without *Form*, as *Love* without a particular *Object*. And, as 'tis neceſſary to the very Being of Love that it have an Object, ſo is it to our Content and Happineſs, that it be a proportionate and ſatisfying one; for otherwiſe, that Paſſion which was intended as an inſtument of *Happineſs*, will prove an *affliction* and *torment* to us. Now there is but one ſuch Object to be found, and that is God. In the Application of our Paſſions to other Things, the Advice of the Poet is exceeding neceſſary,

Quicquid amas cupias placuiſſe nimis.

Martial.

That we ſhould be very cautious how far we ſuffer our ſelves to be engaged in the Love of any Thing, becauſe there is nothing but *diſappointment* in the *Enjoyment*, and *uncertainty* in the *Poſſeſſion*. We muſt needs therefore be miſerable in our Love, unleſs God be the Object of it. But neither is our Happineſs ſufficiently ſecured by making *God* the Object of our Love, unleſs we *concenter* our whole Affections upon him, and (in the ſtricteſt ſenſe of the Phraſe) *Love him with all our Heart, and with all our Soul*. For otherwiſe, whatever portion of our Love does not run in this Channel, muſt neceſſarily fix upon

diſproportionate and unſatisfying Objects; and conſequently, be an inſtrument of Diſcontent to us. 'Tis neceſſary therefore, to the compleating of our Happineſs, that that Object ſhould *engroſs* all our Affections to it ſelf, which only can ſatisfie them; and (according to the compariſon of an ingenious *Platoniſt*) that our Minds ſhould have the ſame habitude to God, that the Eye has to Light. Now the Eye does not only love Light above other Things, but *delights* in nothing elſe. I confeſs, ſuch an *abſolute* and *entire Dedication* of our Love to God as this, is not always practicable in this Life. It is the priviledge and happineſs of thoſe *confirm'd* Spirits, who are ſo ſwallow'd up in the *Comprehenſions* of *Eternity*, and ſo perpetually raviſh'd with the Glories of the Divine Beauty, that they have not the *power* to turn aſide to any other Object. But tho' this Superlative Excellency of Divine Love, be not attainable on this ſide of the *thick darkneſs*, it being the proper effect of *open Viſion*, and not of *Contemplation*; yet however, by the Help of this later, we may arrive to many degrees of it; and the more entire and undivided our Love is to God, the fewer diſappointments and diſſatisfactions we ſhall meet with in the World; which is a very ſtrong Engagement to *Heroic Piety*.

Marſilius Ficinus, Tom. 2. pag. 315.

16. Fourthly, I conſider, That the degrees of our *Reward* ſhall be proportionable to the degrees of our *Piety*: We ſhall Reap as plentifully as we Sow; and at the great Day of Retribution, we ſhall find, that beſides the general *Collation* of Happineſs, peculiar Coronets of Glory are prepared for *Emi-*

Eminent Saints. Indeed, all hearty and ſincere Lovers of God and Religion, ſhall partake of the *Glories* of the *Kingdom*; but ſome ſhall ſit nearer the Throne than others, and enjoy a more *intimate* Perception of the *Divine Beauty*. All the true *Followers* of Jeſus ſhall indeed *Feaſt* with him at the *great Supper*; but ſome ſhall be placed nearer to him than others; and ſtill there ſhall be a *Beloved Diſciple* that ſhall *lean* on his *Boſom*. I know this Doctrin concerning different degrees of Glory, is (and indeed what is there that is not) very much queſtion'd by ſome, and peremptorily deny'd by others; but ſince it is ſo highly agreeable to the Goodneſs and Bounty of God, and to the *Catholick* Meaſures of Senſe and Reaſon; and is ſo mightily favour'd if not expreſly aſſerted in many Places of Scripture, I ſhall not here go about to eſtabliſh the Truth of it; but taking it for granted, do urge this as another Conſideration of great Moment, toward encouraging the Practice of *Heroic Piety*.

17. Fifthly, and Laſtly, I Conſider, That We have indeed but very little Time to ſerve God in. The Life of Man at longeſt, is but ſhort; and conſidering how ſmall a part of it we *Live*, much *ſhorter*. If we *deduct* from the *Computation* of our Years (as we muſt do, if we will take a true Eſtimate of our Life) that part of our Time which is ſpent in the incogitancy of Infancy and Childhood, the impertinence and heedleſſneſs of Youth, in the Neceſſities of Nature, Eating, Drinking, Sleeping, and other Refreſhments; in Buſineſs and Worldly Concerns, engagements with Friends and Relations,

in the Offices of Civility and mutual Intercourſe; beſides a thouſand other unneceſſary Avocations: We ſhall find that there is but a ſmall Portion left, even for the Retirements of Study, for our improvement in Arts and Sciences, and other intellectual Accompliſhments. But then, if we conſider what great *diſburſments* of our Time are made upon *them* alſo, we ſhall find, that Religion is *crowded* up into a very *narrow Compaſs*; ſo narrow, that were not the Rewards of Heaven matter of *expreſs Revelation*, 'twould be the greateſt *Preſumption* imaginable, to hope for them upon the Condition of ſuch *inconſiderable* Services. Since then our Time of ſerving God is ſo very ſhort, ſo infinitely diſproportionate to the Rewards we expect from him, 'tis but a reaſonable piece of Ingenuity, to work *with all our might*, and do as much in it as we can: To ſupply the *poverty* of Time by *frugal* Management, and *intenſeneſs* of Affection; to ſerve God *earneſtly*, *vigorouſly*, and *zealouſly*; and in one Days Devotion, to *abbreviate* the *ordinary* Piety of *many Years*. 'Tis ſaid of the Devil, that he proſecuted his malicious deſigns againſt the Church with greater earneſtneſs and vigour, becauſe *he knew he had but a ſhort time*, Rev. 12. 12. And ſhall not the ſame Conſideration prevail with a *generous* Soul, to do as much for God and Religion, as the Devil did *againſt* them? 'Tis a ſhame for him that has but a *ſhort* Part to Act upon the *Stage*, not to perform it *well*; eſpecially when he is to Act it but *once*. Man has but one *ſtate of Probation*, and that of an exceeding ſhort Continuance, and therefore, ſince he cannot ſerve God *long*, he ſhould ſerve him *much*, em-

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ploy every Minute of his Life to the beſt Advantage, *thicken* his Devotions, *hallow* every *day* in his *Kalendar* by Religious Exerciſes, and every *action* in his *Life* by Holy *References* and *Deſignments*; for let him make what haſte he can to be *Wiſe*, Time will *out-run* him. This is a Conſideration of infinite Moment to him that duly weighs it; and he that *thus numbers his days*, will find great Reaſon to *apply his Heart* to more than *ordinary* degrees of *Wiſdom*.

Contemplation and Love: Or, the Methodical Aſſent of the Soul to God, by Steps of Meditation.

Contemplation I.

That 'tis neceſſary Man ſhould have ſome End.

1. IN the Depth of Solitude and Silence, having withdrawn my ſelf not only from all Worldly Commerce, but from all Thoughts concerning any Thing without my own Sphere; I retire wholly into my ſelf, and there ſpeculate the Compoſition of my *Intellectual* Nature.

2. And here, beſides that faculty of *Perception* whereby I apprehend Objects, whether Material or Immaterial, without any Material Species; (which in the *Carteſian* Dialect I call *Pure Intellect*) and that other of apprehending Objects as preſent, under a corporeal Image or Repreſentation; (which I diſtinguiſh from the other Power of Perception by the Name of *Imagination*) I ſay, beſides theſe Two, I obſerve an *Appetitive* Faculty, whereby I incline to Apparent Good; and that either by a bare Act of *Propenſion*, or endeavour to Unite with the agreeable Object; which anſwers to Pure Intellect, and may be call'd (*Will* or rather *Volition*) or by ſuch a Propenſion of the Soul, as is alſo accompany'd

company'd with a Commotion of the Blood and Spirits; which anſwers to Imagination; and is the ſame with the *Paſſion* of *Love*.

3. And of this I further meditate, and by ſelf-reflexion experiment; that altho' the *Perceptive* Faculty be not always in actual Exerciſe, or at leaſt not in the ſame degree of it: (For, if according to the *Carteſian* Hypotheſis there be no intermiſſion of Cogitation, yet 'tis moſt certain, that its Applications are not always equal and uniform) tho' this I ſay, be true as to the *Perceptive*; yet, I find by attending to the Operations of my Nature, that the *Appetitive* Faculty is not only always in Act, but in the ſame degree of Intention and Application. As it never has any total Intermiſſion, ſo neither is it ſubject (as indeed every Thing elſe in Man is) to *Ebbs* and *Flows*, but acts *uniformly* as well as *conſtantly*. This Amorous *Biaſs* and Endeavour of the Soul, is like that Stock of Motion which the *French* Philoſopher ſuppoſes the Univerſe at firſt endowed with, which continues always at the ſame rate, not to be abated or increas'd. Not that this Equality of Love is to be underſtood in reference to *particular* Objects, any more than that of Motion in reference to particular Bodies; but only, that it gains in one part, as much as it loſes in another; ſo as in the whole, to remain equal and uniform.

4. For however various and unconſtant I may be in my Love of particular Objects according to the various Apprehenſion I have of their reſpective Excellencies; yet certainly, I perſue *Happineſs* in *general* with the ſame Earneſtneſs and Vigour; and

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do not love, or *wiſh well* to my ſelf, more at one time than at another.

5. And indeed, ſince all my inconſtancy in the proſecution of particular Objects proceeds from the variety of my Apprehenſions concerning their Excellency; and the only reaſon why I withdraw my Affection from this, or that thing, is, becauſe I diſcern, or ſuſpect, that Happineſs not to be there which I expected, it is hence plainly argued *a poſteriori*, that I ſtand at all Times equally affected towards Happineſs it ſelf. As he that is therefore only variouſly affected towards the Means, according as he variouſly apprehends their ſerviceableneſs to the End, may be truly ſaid, to affect the End it ſelf always alike.

6. Nor can it poſſibly be otherwiſe, than that I ſhould thus point at Happineſs with an equal *Verticity*; becauſe I always affect it in the higheſt degree that is poſſible; which admits of no *Latitude*. For I conſider my ſelf here, as a *neceſſary Agent*; and accordingly as ſuch, can neither ſuſpend the whole Act, nor any one Degree of it; but muſt needs Operate to the utmoſt Stretch of my Power. This *Spring* of my Soul (my Appetitive Faculty) is always at its *full Bent*; and accordingly, preſſes and endeavours with its whole *Elaſticity*.

7. For ſince Good or Happineſs is the *utmoſt* object of my *Appetitive*, it muſt needs employ its *whole* Power; otherwiſe, ſo much of it as is not in Act, will be for ever uncapable of being ſo; (there being nothing left beyond that to bring it into Act) and conſequently, will be planted in me in vain, which I think abſurd to admit; and therefore find it

it neceſſary to conclude, That my Appetitive is wholly employ'd in the Love of Happineſs; or that I always love it to the utmoſt Capacity of my Faculty.

8. Since therefore, I find in my ſelf an Appetitive Faculty, which is always in actual Exerciſe, and that after an even and equal Meaſure; and not only ſo, but alſo in the very Height of Activity and *Invigoration*; I am by the clue of Meditation further led to conclude, That there muſt be ſome *Center* for this *Weight*; ſome Object or other, either within or without me, of ſuch ample, copious, and ſolid Excellence, as may anſwer to the full Extent of my Deſires, bear the whole *ſtreſs* of my inclining Soul, and ſuch as may well deſerve to be call'd, the *End* of *Man*.

9. For I cannot think it any way Conſiſtent with the goodneſs of that great Being, which call'd me out of the Womb of Nothing to what I am, to Plant in me ſuch an *Amorous* Principle, which at no time lies *Dormant*, but is always *equally* Awake, and acting with the utmoſt plenitude of its Vigour; ſuppoſing there were no proportionable Object in the whole *Latitude* of *Entity* for it to fix and bottom upon. It being only a greater preparation and qualification for Miſery, to have inlarged Faculties and Appetites, when there is nothing to afford them agreeable Satisfaction. Which however ſome may be juſtly ſubjected to for their *after-demerit*, can yet never be reaſonably ſuppoſed to be the *Antecedent* Will of God.

10. And this I am further induced to believe, when I conſider how the great Author of Nature, has

has made proviſion for the Entertainment of our animal Faculties, and particular Appetites: All our Senſes, Seeing, Hearing, Taſting, Smelling and Touching, have their proper Objects, and opportunities of Pleaſure reſpectively. Which makes it very unlikely, that our great and general Appetite of being *Happy*, ſhould be the only one that is diſinherited and unprovided for. Eſpecially, conſidering that the Enjoyment and Indulgence of any of the reſt is then only, and in ſuch Inſtances and Circumſtances reſtrain'd, when the greater Intereſts of Happineſs are thereby croſs'd and defeated. Which argues, that the True Happineſs of Man is the Thing chiefly regarded by God; and conſequently, that there is a Proviſion for that *great* Appetite of his being *Happy*, as well as for any of the reſt.

11. Which is yet further confirm'd to me, when I conſider, That there is an *exemplification* of it in the *material* Part of the Univerſe; the moſt ponderous Body that it has its Center towards, which it always preſſes, and in which it ſettles with full Acquieſcence. Now ſince there is ſomething in Spiritual Beings which correſponds to *weight* in Bodies, (according to that of St. *Auſtin*, *Amor tuus eſt Pondus tuum*) the Analogy of the Thing perſwades me to think, that there is alſo ſomething which ſhall be to them in the Nature of a *Center*.

12. And as the contrary is inconſiſtent with the Divine *Goodneſs*, ſo neither can I reconcile it to the *Wiſdom* of him who made all Things in *Number*, *Weight* and *Meaſure*, to be ſo much out in his *Proportions*, as to Create an Appetite too high, vigo-

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rous, and craving, for the excellency and fulneſs of any Object. This would be like making a Body too heavy for the *Central* Poiſe; or, as if the *Spring* of a Watch ſhould be made too Strong for the *Wheel*; or any other ſuch diſproportionate operations; which neither comports with the *Geometry* of the Divine *Mind*, nor with the exact Harmony of his *other Works*.

13. The *Concluſion* therefore from theſe *Premiſes* is, That Man is not as a Body for ever, rolling on in an Infinite Vacuity; or as a Needle continually *trembling* for an *Embrace*: But that he has his proper *End* and *Center*; to which 'tis poſſible for him to arrive; and in which, as impoſſible for him when once arrived, not fully to Acquieſce.

The PRAYER.

MY God, *my* Creator, *who by that active principle of Love and immenſe Deſire, thou haſt interwoven with my Nature, haſt given me fair grounds to Conclude, that there muſt be ſome End on which I may fix and Center with the full ſtreſs of my Faculties; point out to me by the guidance of thy Spirit this my True End, direct me in the Purſuance, and bring me to the Attainment of it. Let me neither* miſtake *my true Center, nor by any irregular or* oblique *Motion,* decline *from it. But as thou haſt appointed me for Happineſs, and furniſhed me with Natural Capacities of receiving it, ſo let it be thy good pleaſure to poſſeſs my Soul with ſuch a ſerious and diligent Concern for my great Intereſt, that I may not by any default of mine, fail*

fail of that excellent Good which will fill all the Emptineſſes of my Soul; leave no deſire unſatisfi'd, and no trouble I can undergo in the queſt of it, unrewarded. O ſuffer me not to be diſappointed of that excellent, that only Good: but as thou haſt made me Aſpire towards it Infinitely, ſo grant I may Enjoy it Eternally, for thy great Love and Goodneſs ſake, Amen.

Contemplation II.

That 'tis impoſſible Man ſhould be his own End.

1. BEing from my *yeſterdays* Contemplation of my Intellectual Nature, and the ſtock of Deſires therein implanted, led to this *Concluſion*, That 'tis neceſſary Man ſhould have ſome End; I now conſider, that 'tis but to carry on the Thred of the ſame Contemplation a little further, and 'twill as evidently appear, That 'tis impoſſible Man ſhould be his own End.

2. For while I ſtand fix'd in the Contemplation of my ſelf, I obſerve, that I have this *Appetitive* Principle, not only in ſuch a manner as anſwers to *Weight* in Bodies, but alſo ſo as to be analogous to *gravitation*, that is to Weight not only *in actu primo*, but *in actu ſecundo*, as it denotes ſuch an Inclination of Body, whereby not only one part preſſes againſt another, but whereby the whole leans, and endeavours to ſomething beyond the Bounds of its own *Circumference*.

3. For, beſides Acts of *Self-complacency*, whereby I delight and pleaſe my ſelf in the Perfections of my

my Nature, and turn as it were upon my own *Axis*; I find in me a great deal of *Extatical* Love, which continually carries me out to Good without my ſelf; which I endeavour to cloſe and Unite with, in hopes of bettering my preſent State, and of ſupplying from *without* what I ſeek, but cannot find *within*.

4. Hence therefore I conclude, That I am not (whatever Complacencies I may ſometimes take in my ſelf) a *Central* or *ſelf-terminative* Being; it being as impoſſible that what is ſo, ſhould Love any thing *without*, (as Love is taken for *Deſire* or Aſpiring to Good) as that a Body ſhould gravitate in the *Center*. That which Loves any thing *without*, wants ſomething *within*. If therefore I *gravitate*, I am off from the *Center*; conſequently, not my own Center.

5. And that I cannot ever Center in my ſelf, and be my own End, is yet further evidenc'd to me, when I contemplate the great *Diſproportion* between my *Appetitive* and all my *other Perfections*, whether of Body or of Mind. I deſire both more *Kinds* of Pleaſure than they all can afford, and more *Degrees* of Pleaſure in the ſame kind. Which muſt neceſſarily be, becauſe my Deſires are extended to all poſſible Good, but my real Endowments and Perfections are infinitely ſhort of that Extent. And by conſequence, my Deſires cannot be *cramp'd* within the narrow Bounds of my own Sphere, but will of neceſſity run out farther, even as far as there is Good without it.

6. And as there is a manifeſt diſproportion between my Stock of *Self-perfection* and my *Apetitive*

tive, as to its *objective* Latitude (*viz.*) the *kinds* and *degrees* of Happineſs; ſo is there no leſs as to the *intenſeneſs* of its Acts. This Appetitive of mine (as was remark'd in the preceding Contemplation) is alway in an *equal* Invigoration, and burns with an even and uniform Heat; but I have not within my ſelf *Fewel* enough to maintain this Flame in an equal height. I always equally *Deſire*, but I am not always equally *Deſirable:* partly becauſe I am ſometimes (even in my own partial Judgment) in a Condition of leſs Excellence, both as to my Morals and Intellectuals, than at other Times; and partly, becauſe the Stock of my Perfections, tho' 'twere poſſible they could be always alike as my *Deſires* are, yet being both *Finite* in Nature, and *Few* in Number, cannot bear a long and uninterrupted Enjoyment, and appear ſtill equally grateful under it; any more than a ſhort Poem, tho' in it ſelf equally excellent, can pleaſe equally after a Million of Repetitions.

7. Hence it comes to paſs, that I do not always take an equal Complacency in my ſelf, but am oftentimes (eſpecially after long Retirements) apt to be Melancholy, and to grow weary of my own Company; ſo that I am fain to lay aſide my ſelf (as it were) for a while, and relieve the *penury* of Solitude with the variety of Company, and ſo *whet* my Appetite toward my ſelf as I do toward my Meat, by *Faſting* and *Abſtemiouſneſs*.

8. Since therefore, I always deſire equally, but not my *ſelf:* (being not upon the two Accounts before mention'd always equally deſirable) it follows, That the ſteddineſs and evenneſs of this my Flame,

Flame, muſt depend upon ſome *other* Fuel, good which is *without* me. And conſequently, I do not Terminate in my ſelf, and ſo am not my own End.

The Prayer.

MY God, *my* Creator, *who haſt in thy great Wiſdom furniſh'd me with Deſires too large and vehement for the other Perfections of my Nature; and haſt thereby made it impoſſible that I ſhould ever be my own End; grant me effectually to Conſider the Barrenneſs and Inſufficiency of my own Nature, and how unable I am upon my own ſolitary Stock, to ſatisfie the Importunity of my Soul: that ſo I may not be Tranſported with vain Complacencies, nor endeavour to Bottom my ſelf upon ſuch a Center, as will moulder away under me, and deceive me. Let me ever weigh my ſelf in a true Ballance; and be as obſervant of my Imperfections, as of my Excellencies. Let me be ever* thankful *for the one, and* humble *for the other. Whatever elſe I am ignorant of, O grant me a true Underſtanding of my ſelf; that I may not to the* vanity *of my Nature, add* levity *of Spirit, nor become deſpicable in* thy *Eyes, by being too precious in my own.* Amen, Amen.

Contemplation III.

That 'tis impoſſible that any other Created Good ſhould be the End of Man.

1. HAving by the Light of Contemplation, diſcover'd the neceſſity of Man's having ſome End, and the utter impoſſibility of his ever being his own End; I am now concern'd to look beyond the Orb of my own Perfections, and to conſider, Whether the whole Latitude of the *Creation*, can afford any good that will Terminate the *Amorous* Bent of my Soul; and wherein I may ſweetly and ſecurely Reſt, as in my *End* or *Center*.

2. And this I am the more induced to enquire into, Firſt, Becauſe I obſerve that the generality of Men, and thoſe ſome of the moſt Sagacious, Thinking, and Inquiſitive, do purſue many Intereſts in this viſible and ſublunary World (which yet is the moſt cheap and inconſiderable Part of the Creation) with as much Fervency, Vigour and Aſſiduity, as they could poſſibly do, were it the True End of Man. So that one would think by the *quickneſs* of their *motion*, they were nigh the *Center*.

3. Secondly, Becauſe I obſerve concerning my ſelf, that there are ſome *few* Things in the World which I Love with great Paſſion, and Delight in with ſomething like *Satisfaction* and *Acquieſcence*. Such as are Converſation with ſelect Friends, or Men of harmonical and *tunable* Diſpoſitions; reading

ing of close and fine-wrought Discourses, solitary Walks and Gardens, the Magnificence of the Heavens, the Beauty of the Spring; and above all, majestic and well composed Music. Which last, could I enjoy it in its highest Perfection, and without Interruption, would, I am apt to fancy, Terminate my Desires, and make me Happy; at least, I am well assured, I should *pity* more than I should *envy*.

4. Thirdly, Because I consider, that the great Author of Nature is brought in by *Moses*, commending upon a *deliberate Review*, all the Works of his Hands. That which before the Divine Incubation was תהו ובהו *Solitude and Inanity*, after the Spirit had moved upon the Waters, he pronounced טוב מאד *Superlatively Good*. So very Superlatively Good, that even the Glory of *Solomon* in the Judgment of him who was both greater and wiser than he, was not comparable to one of Natures meanest Flowers. And if the Beauty and Variety of the Creature was so considerable, as to merit Approbation from him that made it, what is there of our Love and Complacency that it may not Challenge? That which can but *please* God, may well be suppos'd, able to *satisfie* Man: That wherein the Creator *delights*, the Creature one would think, might fully *rest* and *acquiesce* in.

5. By such Considerations as these, when solely attended to, I have been sometimetimes almost prevail'd upon to think, That there is good enough in the Creation of God, if amass'd together, and fully enjoy'd, to employ the whole Activity of my

Love, and fix the entire Weight of my Soul. But yet, when I conſider *experience*, and compare the Aſpirations of my Nature with the Goodneſs of the Creation, I am driven to conclude, That altho the Creatures of God (whatever the *Manichees* ſay to the contrary) are all good enough to afford Matter for *Entertainment* and *Praiſe*, yet they cannot *detain*, and give *Anchorage* to the Soul of Man. The motion of the Appetite may be ſomewhat *reſiſted* by Created Good, and its force a little *broken*, but it will ſoon ſink through, like a Stone through a watery *Medium*. Some repaſt may be found in the Creature; but as for complete Satisfaction, and Termination of Deſires, *the Sea ſaith it is not in me, and the Depth ſaith it is not in me*. All that God ever did, or ever can make, will prove inſufficient for this purpoſe; and come under that decretory Sentence of the Wiſe Preacher, *Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity*.

6. And this is firſt confirm'd to me from *Experience*; and that not my own only, but of all *Mankind*. For as the weight of my Affections (as was obſerv'd in yeſterdays Contemplation) is *extatical*, and inclines to good without my ſelf; ſo does it preſs beyond that which is *Created* too; and conſequently argues, That the Creation without me, can no more be my Center, than I can be to my ſelf.

7. For not to inſiſt upon the great Emptineſs of *Fruition*, That every Flower in this Paradiſe of God, *ſhrinks* aſſoon as *touch'd*; that whatever *Reverſions* and *Proſpects* of happineſs we may have, 'tis yet ſeldom known that any Man pronounces him-

himſelf tolerably Happy in the *preſent*; That Men are not pleas'd with that themſelves, for which they envy another: Not to inſiſt, I ſay on theſe, and the like, Did ever any Man, tho' never ſo fortunate in his Deſigns, and never ſo well pleas'd at his Attainments, find himſelf able to confine his Deſires within the Sphere of that Good he was poſſeſs'd of? 'Tis true indeed, he may deſire no more of the ſame; he may have ſo much of *Riches*, as to deſire no more *Riches*; ſo much of *Honour*, as to deſire no more *Honour*; but he cannot have ſo much of any thing, as not ſimply to deſire on further. That is in ſhort; He may be *ſatiated*, but not *ſatisfy'd*.

8. And this we have confirm'd by the ingenious Confeſſion of one, who *dug* as *low* for his *Treaſure* as ever Man did or could; that ranſack'd the whole Creation, and ſeem'd to make it his profeſs'd Buſineſs, to extract if poſſible, this *Divine Elixir*; not as a *Voluptuary*, but as a *Philoſopher*; for *Experiment* and *Curioſity*, more than for *Senſuality* and *Pleaſure*. But what was the iſſue? Why, after the chargeable *Operation*, the deluded *Chymiſt* ſits down, recounts his gains, and finds this to be the ſum of them, That his *Judgment* indeed was *inform'd*, but not that his *Deſires* were *ſatisfied*: That he had with all his Coſt, bought only this piece of Wiſdom, to know the vanity of the Creation ſo far, as to give o'er all further ſearch, and loſe no more Time, Coſt and Labour, in a *fruitleſs Experiment*.

9. And that what this great Enquirer after Happineſs experimented is every Mans Caſe, I am further aſſured, when I Contemplate, that the great-

eſt Favorites of Fortune, thoſe who have had the World at Command, and could enjoy all that is good in it, with almoſt as little trouble as 'twas Created, at a *words ſpeaking*, have yet all along been ſubject to Melancholy, eſpecially after ſome notable Enjoyment; as the *Grecian Hero* Wept when he had Conquer'd the World. Now what ſhould the Cauſe of this be, but that they find themſelves Empty in the midſt of their fullneſs; that they *Deſire* further than they *Enjoy*; that however every Senſe about them be feaſted to the Height, yet there remains a *general* Appetite, that of being *Happy*, which is not ſatisfy'd; and not only ſo, but becauſe they ſuſpect withal (as indeed they have very good reaſon, having taſted the *utmoſt* of Natures Entertainment) that it *never* ſhall be. And from this *Deſire* and *Deſpair*, proceeds their Melancholy and Dejection of Spirit. And to this purpoſe, I call to mind a very remarkable Story recorded by *Euſebius Nierembergius*, in his Book *De Arte Voluntatis*, concerning an Eaſtern Emperour, who was minded to try the ſame Experiment upon his Son, as *Solomon* did upon himſelf; and to ſee how far the Accommodations of Life, might go towards True Felicity. He accordingly, train'd him up from his Infancy in magnificent Apartments, ſtudiouſly remov'd from him all pitiable Objects, that he might not have ſo much as a *Notion* of Miſery, humour'd him in every Punctilio, and furniſh'd him with whatſoever he either did wiſh for, or might be ſuppos'd to take Pleaſure in; till at length, the *unfortunately* Happy young Man, obſerving himſelf to be ſtill in *Deſires*, and that in lib. 6. p. 537.

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a State of all poſſible Worldly Affluence, could no longer flatter himſelf with *imaginary* Proſpects, but concluded, That no Condition would ever mend the matter; and ſo fell into extream Melancholy and Deſpair.

10. Now I conſider, That if *mean* Perſons only were ſubject to Melancholy, the *Deſire* from whence it proceeded might be accounted for another way; namely, from their not having ſo *much* of *Created* Good, as if *poſſeſs'd*, might be thought ſufficient to ſatisfie. But when Men that ſit on the Top of Fortune's Wheel, and drink at the *head Fountains* of Nature, are yet liable to Melancholy Dejections, 'tis to me a plain Argument, that the Cauſe of this Melancholy, their *Deſires*, proceeds from a *Deficiency* in the *Things themſelves*; not that they are ſtraitned in their *Poſſeſſions*, but that the *Things* which they poſſeſs, are *weigh'd in the Ballance, and found wanting*.

11. Thus far is this Truth atteſted to by *Experience*. But I am yet further aſſured of it, when I compare the Aſpirations of my Nature with the goodneſs of the Creation; for when I do ſo, I find they are very *diſproportionate*. 'Twas a Celebrated Problem among the Ancient Mythologiſts, What was the *ſtrongeſt* thing, what the *wiſeſt*, and what the *greateſt*? Concerning which 'twas thus determin'd, that the *ſtrongeſt* Thing was *Neceſſity*, the *wiſeſt* was *Time*; and the *greateſt*, was the *Heart* of Man. And well may that be call'd the *greateſt* Thing, whoſe Capacity can take in the whole Creation, and yet like the *immenſe ſpace*, remain ſtill an *unrepleniſh'd* Emptineſs.

12. For my Deſires are circumſcribed with no Limits, but run on indefinitely to all poſſible Good. But now the *good* of the *Creation*, like the *Creation* it ſelf, is *bounded*; the very Notion of a *Creature* involving *Imperfection*, as much as *Body* does *Circumſcrition* and Termination. Hence therefore I conclude, That not only all the good of the Creation, though collected together into *Extract* and *Spirit* by the *Chymiſtry* of its great Author, would be inſufficient to afford me perfect Satisfaction; but that 'tis not in the *Power* of him that is *Omnipotent*, to Create any good that can ſatisfie my Deſires, any more than to Create a Body that ſhall fill Immenſe Space. And conſequently, That 'tis impoſſible that any Created Good ſhould be the End of Man.

The Prayer.

My God, my Creator, who haſt made all Things for the preſent Entertainment, but nothing for the End of Man; grant I may ever juſtly diſcern between the Goodneſs and the Vanity of thy Creatures, that I may not either by not heeding to the former, become Unthankful, or by not heeding to the later, become Idolatrous. O keep this Conviction ſtill awake in me, How inſufficient all Created Good is towards true Felicity; that I may not any longer with the miſtaken Votaries of thy Son's Sepulcher, ſeek the Living among the Dead, Light in the Regions of Darkneſs; and that I may no longer labour for that which is not Bread. Let me not add Care, Labour and Toil to the Miſery of unquench'd Thirſts, and unſatisfy'd Deſires: but ſince I

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am certain never to find Reſt in the Boſom of thy Creation, grant I may be ſo wiſe at leaſt, as not to weary my ſelf more in the fruitleſs Purſuit of it. Withdraw, I beſeech thee, my expectations of Happineſs from all the works of thy hands; and fix them there only, where there is no Diſappointment or Deluſion, even in the true Center of all Deſire: for the ſake of thy tender Compaſſions, Amen.

Contemplation IV.

That God who is the Author of Man, is likewiſe his true End and Center.

1. When I Contemplate the Nature of Man, and conſider how the Deſire of Happineſs is interwoven with it; That *Love is ſtrong as Death, and importunate as the Grave*; That there is a vehement and conſtant *Verticity* in the Soul towards perfect Good, which begins aſſoon, and is as Immortal as her ſelf; and withal, how diſproportionately this *Amorous Diſpoſition* of the Soul is gratify'd by any Entertainment, whether domeſtic or foreign, ſhe can meet with in the Circle of *Created* Good: I find it neceſſary to conclude, that the great Being who commanded me to Exiſt, is ſo every way Perfect and All-ſufficient, as to anſwer that vaſt Stock of Deſires our Natures come Fraught withal into the World; ſince otherwiſe (which is abſurd to ſuppoſe) of all the Creatures in it, Man would be the moſt Miſerable,

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2. For what Man of *Thoughts* is there, who after a through Conviction, that he can neither get *rid* of his Deſires, nor among the Proviſions of Nature have them fully *gratify'd*, would not immediately throw up his Title to Immortality, if he thought himſelf arriv'd to the *Meridian* of his Happineſs, and that he muſt never expect to be in a better Condition than he is? For to have his Deſires *enlarg'd*, and nothing to ſatisfie them, is ſuch a *Contrivance* for Miſery, that 'tis thought by ſome, to be the *Portion* of Hell, and to make up the very *Formality* of Damnation.

3. But to our great Conſolation, 'tis wholly in our own Power, whether it ſhall be *always* ſo with us, or no. There is a Being, whoſe *Perfections* are anſwerable to our *Deſires*. He that made us, can ſatisfie every Appetite he has planted in us; and he that is Happy in *reflecting* upon himſelf, can make us ſo too, by the *direct* View of his Glory. He can Entertain all our Faculties; our *Underſtandings*, as he is *Truth*; and our *Wills*, as he is *Goodneſs*; and that in the *Higheſt* Degree, becauſe he is Infinite in *both*. He can more than employ all our Powers in their utmoſt *Elevation*; for he is every way Perfect, and All-ſufficient, *yea he is altogether Lovely*.

4. But to evince more particularly and diſtinctly, That God is the true End of Man, I ſhall conſider, whether the Conditions requiſite to his being ſo are found in him. Now theſe can be no other than theſe two in general. 1ſt, That he be abſolutely Good and Perfect in himſelf, ſo as to be *able* to fill and ſatisfie the whole Capacity of our Deſires; and 2*ly*, That he be *willing* that Man ſhall partake of this

this his Tranſcendent Fulneſs, ſo as actually one time or other to fix the weight of his Appetite, and become his Center. If therefore theſe two Conditions are found in God, he has all that is requiſite to make him our End. And that they are, is now to be made appear.

5. Firſt then, That God is abſolutely Good and Perfect in himſelf, ſo as to be able to fill and ſatisfie the whole Capacity of our Deſires. There are ſeveral Topicks in the *Metaphiſics* from whence I might infer this, but I ſhall confine my preſent Speculation to this one, That God is the *Firſt Being*. This is a very reaſonable *Poſtulatum*; it being too obvious to need any proof, that there is a *Firſt Being*, or, that by the *Firſt Being* is meant God. It remains therefore, that we try what advantage may be made of it.

6. When therefore I conſider God as the *Firſt Being*, I am from thence in the firſt place, led to conclude, That he has *eminently*, and in a moſt excellent manner in himſelf, all kinds and degrees of Perfection, that exiſt looſely and ſeparately in all ſecond Beings. And that, not only becauſe the Effect cannot poſſibly exceed the Virtue of the Cauſe, any more than it can proceed from no Cauſe: (which is the ground *Carteſius* builds upon, when he proves the Exiſtence of God from the *objective* reality of his *Idea*) but becauſe I further obſerve, that in the *Scale* of Being all *Aſcenſion* is by *Addition*, and, that what is diſpers'd in the Inferiour, is collected, and that after a more excellent manner, in the Superiour. Thus in Vegetables, there is bare Life; in Senſitives, Vegetative, Life and Senſe;

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in Rationals, Vegetative, Life, Senſe and Reaſon: and all this either formally or eminently with Intelligence in Angels. And ſince there is ſuch an Harmonical *Subordination* among ſecond Beings, ſo that the Superiour contains all the Perfection of the Inferiour, with a peculiar Excellence of its own ſuperadded; I think I have fair grounds to conclude, That the abſolutely Firſt Being has in his rich Eſſence, all the ſcattered Excellencies of the ſubordinate ones, in a more perfect manner than they *themſelves* have, with ſome peculiar Excellence of his own beſides.

7. Now though a Being thus *accumulatively* Perfect and Excellent, would be beyond all Conception, great and glorious, and would employ an Eternity, in *Contemplation* and *Love*; we have yet ſeen but an *Arm* of this *Sea* of *Beauty*, and been enlightned only with the *Back-parts* of his Glory. For if God be the Firſt *Being*, as is here ſuppoſed, I may further conclude, that he is alſo the Firſt *Good*: (*Good* and *Being* being convertible, and every thing having ſo much Good in it as it has of Entity, and no more) and if he be the Firſt Good, I cannot ſee how this Concluſion can be avoided, That he is *Infinitely Good.*

8. For I conſider, that the Firſt Good can have no *Cauſe* of that Goodneſs which it has: otherwiſe, it being neceſſary that the *Cauſe* of Good ſhould be *Good*, it would not be the *Firſt*. And if the Firſt *Good* can have no Cauſe of its Goodneſs, it can likewiſe have no Cauſe of the *Termination* of it; ſince what has no Cauſe *abſolutely* and *ſimply*, cannot have a Cauſe in any particular *reſpect*; and if it has

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no Cauſe of its Termination, it muſt neceſſarily be *Intermediate* or Infinite, and Conſequently God, who is the *Firſt* Good, is infinitely Good.

9. And now Breath a while my Soul; and conſider what a Rich Mine of Good thou haſt Sprung. Thou haſt found out a Being, who is not only the Ideal as well as Efficent Cauſe of all Created Excellence; but who is *Infinitely* Good and Excellent. This is he whoſe great Perfection not only contains and infinitely exceeds, but *Eclipſes*, and quite *Extinguiſhes* all the Beauty of the Creature; ſo that (as the expreſs Image of this great Excellence informs us) *there is none Good, but one, which is God.* This is he whoſe Good is incomprehenſible by the Underſtanding, and inexhauſtible by the Will and Affections of Man. This is the celebrated Αὐταρκέστατον of *Ariſtotle*, the ἰδέα τοῦ Ἀγαθοῦ of *Plato*, and the *El Shaddai* of the *Hebrews*. This is the great πᾶν πλήρωμα, the univerſal Plenitude, whoſe Happineſs is conſummated within his own Circle; who ſupports himſelf upon the *Baſis* of his own *All-Sufficiency*, and is his own End and Center.

10. And now what is there more requiſite to qualifie him for being mine alſo but this only, That he be willing that Man ſhall partake of this his tranſcendent Fullneſs, ſo as actually one time or other to fix the *Weight* of his Appetite; which was the ſecond Condition.

11. And that this is alſo found in God, I think I have ſufficient Aſſurance from theſe two Things; the Abſolute Perfection of his Nature; and thoſe expreſs Revelations he has made of his Will, as to this particular. As for the Nature of God, it involves

volves, as in Notion and Conception, ſo likewiſe in Truth and Reality, (as was above demonſtrated) abſolute and infinite Perfection; and conſequently, includes a *Beneficent* and *Communicative* Diſpoſition; this being a *Perfection*.

12. Nor does the Superlative Eminency of the Divine Nature, only argue him to be Communicative, but to be the moſt Communicative and Self-diffuſive of all Beings. For, as all Kinds, ſo all Degrees of Excellency muſt of neceſſity be included in a Being abſolutely and infinitely Perfect, ſuch as God is. Whence it will alſo follow, That he is not only the moſt Communicative of all Beings, but that he will alſo Communicate *himſelf*: and not only ſo, but in ſuch an ample and liberal Meaſure too, as entirely to ſatisfie the moſt aſpiring and reaching Appetite of Man; ſince otherwiſe, ſome degrees of Communicativeneſs, and conſequently, of Excellence, would be wanting; which is abſurd to ſuppoſe in a Being abſolutely Perfect. Eſpecially conſidering, that thoſe importunate Deſires of Human Nature are of his *own* Planting; which as it firmly aſſures us of his being *able*, ſo is it no leſs cogent an Argument for his being *willing* to be our Center; it being incredible, that ſo infinite an Excellence ſhould Plant in Man ſuch Deſires, as either he *could not*, or *would not* ſatisfie.

13. And of this willingneſs of God that Man ſhould partake of his *fulneſs*, ſo far as to Bottom upon it, and Acquieſce in it, there is yet further Aſſurance from many expreſs *Revelations* of his good pleaſure to that purpoſe. Which conſiſt of two kinds, expreſs *words*, wherein he profeſſes himſelf

ſelf paſſionately deſirous of the Salvation and Happineſs of Man; and two very notable and ſignal *Acts*; namely, the Conſigning to the World a Copy of his Will, as a Chart to direct us to the true Haven of Reſt and Anchorage; and the ſending his beloved Son from the Manſions of Glory, to diſlodge the angry Guardian of Paradiſe, and re-open for us an Entrance into the *Joy of our Lord*. By both which kinds of Revelation he has given us the higheſt Aſſurance imaginable, that he deſigns not to Engroſs and Monopolize the Perfections of his rich Eſſence; but that he is heartily willing to admit Man to a Participation of that excellent Good, wherein he himſelf is Happy; to give him (as the Pſalmiſt expreſſes it) *Everlaſting Felicity, and make him glad with the Joy of his Countenance.*

14. To which Conſiderations I might further add, That this excellent Communicativeneſs of the Divine Nature is typically repreſented, and myſteriouſly exemplify'd by the *Porphyrian* Scale of Being. For as there the lower degrees are *determin'd* and *contracted*, but the Higher more *common* and *extenſive*, ſo is it in the *real* Scale of Being. The inferiour, which are either Matter, or complicated and twiſted with Matter, are more contracted, narrow, ſelfiſh and illiberal; but the ſuperiour, as they are leſs immers'd in, and allay'd with Matter, ſo are they more open, diffuſive and free. For indeed, all Contraction and Confinement is from Matter; but 'tis Form and Spirit that is the Root of all Freeneſs and Enlargement. And thus we ſee in Bodies; the more of kin they are to Spirit in Subtilty and Refinement, the more *ſpreading* are they and

ſelf-

ſelf-diffuſive. Whereupon *Light*, which of all Bodies is neareſt ally'd to Spirit, is alſo moſt Diffuſive and Self-communicative. God therefore, who is at the very Top of all Being, who is an abſolute, mere and ſpiritual Act, and who laſtly, is ſuch a *pure Light* as in which *there is no darkneſs at all*, muſt needs be infinitely Self-imparting and Communicative; and Conſequently, wants nothing to qualifie him to be the True End and Center of Man.

The Prayer.

MY God, my Happineſs, who art as well the End as the Author of my Being; who haſt more Perfection than I have Deſire, and art alſo ſeriouſly willing to quench my great Thirſt in the Ocean of thy Perfection; I beſeech thee ſhew me thy Glory. *Withdraw thy Hand from the Clift of the Rock, and remove the Bounds from the Mount of thy Preſence, that I may ſee thee as thou art Face to Face, and ever dwell in the Light of thy Beauty. I have long dwelt with Vanity and Emptineſs, and have made my ſelf weary in the Purſuit of Reſt. O Let me not fail at laſt, after my many wanderings and diſappointments, to be taken up into this true and only Ark of repoſe and ſecurity, where I may for ever Reſt, and for ever Bleſs the Author of my Happineſs. In the mean time ſtrike, I beſeech thee, my Soul with ſuch lively and raviſhing Apprehenſions of thy Excellencies, ſuch bright Irradiations of thy Divine Light, that I may ſee enough to Love thee infinitely, to Depend on thee for my Happineſs entirely, to Live upon holy Hopes and comfortable Expectations, and to*

Bear

Bear up my Spirit under the greateſt Aridities and Dejections with the delightful Proſpect of thy Glories. O let me ſit down under this thy ſhadow with great delight, *till the* fruit of the Tree of Life ſhall be ſweet to my taſte. *Let me ſtay and entertain my longing Soul with the Contemplation of thy Beauty, till thou ſhalt condeſcend to kiſs me with the kiſſes of thy mouth, till thou ſhalt bring me into thy Banqueting-Houſe, where Viſion ſhall be the Support of my Spirit, and thy* Banner over me ſhall be Love. *Grant this, O my God, my Happineſs, for the ſake of thy great Love, and of the Son of thy Love, Chriſt Jeſus. Amen.*

Contemplation V.

Two Corollaries hence deduc'd: the Firſt whereof is, That God is therefore to be loved with all poſſible Application and Elevation of Spirit, with all the Heart, Soul and Mind.

1. AMong the Perfections of Human Nature, the faculty of deſiring or reaching out after agreeable Objects, is not the leaſt conſiderable; and 'tis the peculiar Glory of Man to be an *Amorous*, as well as a *Rational* Being. For by this he ſupplies the Defects of his Nature, not only *enjoys* the Good he unites with, but *digeſts* it as it were into himſelf, and makes it his own; and relieves his *domeſtic* Poverty by *foreign Negotiation.*

2. But tho' the *Pathetic* part of Man be one of the nobleſt Perfections he is furniſhed with, yet ſo generally faulty are we in the due applications and

direction of this Noble Faculty, that to be pathetically and amorouſly diſpos'd, is look'd upon by ſome not as a *Perfection*, but as a *Diſeaſe* of the Soul, and is condemn'd by a whole Order of Men, as inconſiſtent with the Character of Wiſdom, according to that Stoical Aphoriſm, *Amare ſimul & ſapere ipſi Jovi non datur.*

3. But certainly, *Eve* was intended as a Help for *Adam*, tho in the event, ſhe prov'd the Inſtrument of his Seduction; and our Paſſions were given us to perfect and accompliſh our Natures, tho' by accidental miſapplications to unworthy Objects, they may turn to our degradation and diſhonour. We may indeed be *debaſed*, as well as *innobled* by them; but then the fault is not in the large *Sails*, but in the ill *conduct* of the *Pilot*, if our Veſſel miſs the Haven. The Tide of our Love can never run too high, provided it take a right *Channel*; our *Paſſion* then will be our higheſt *Wiſdom*: and he was no Stoic that ſaid, *As the Hart panteth after the water-brooks, ſo panteth my Soul after thee O God*, Pſal. 42. And again, *My Soul is a thirſt for God.* And again, *My Soul breaketh out for fervent deſire.* And again, *Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and there is none upon Earth that I deſire in compariſon of thee*, Pſal. 119. Pſal. 23. 24.

4. Being therefore from the foregoing Periods arrived to this Concluſion, That God is the True End and Center of Man, I think I ought now to looſe the Reins of my Affections, to *unbay* the current of my Paſſion, and Love on without any other boundary or meaſure, than what is ſet me by the finiteneſs of my Natural Powers

5. 'Tis

5. Tis true indeed, Whenever we turn the *Edge* of our Deſire towards any Created Good, 'tis Prudence as well as Religion, to uſe Caution and Moderation, to *gage* the *Point* of our Affections, leſt it run in too far; there being ſo much *Emptineſs* in the *Enjoyment*, and ſo much *Hazard* in the *Poſſeſſion*. When we venture to lean upon ſuch Objects, we are like Men that walk upon a *Quagmire*, and therefore ſhould tread as *lightly* as we can, leſt it give way and ſink under us.

6. But how excellent a Virtue ſoever Moderation may be in our concernments with other Objects, we have nothing to do with it in the Love of that Being who is our End and Center. There is here, danger but of *one Extream*; and that is, of the *defect*. We can Love but finitely, when we have lov'd our utmoſt; and what is that to him who is infinitely Lovely? Since therefore our moſt liberal Proportions will be infinitely ſhort and ſcanty, we ought not ſure, to give *new Retrenchments* to our Love, and cut it yet ſhorter by *frugal* Limitations.

7. For if God be our End and Center, he muſt neceſſarily have all that Good in him which we can poſſibly Deſire; and if ſo, then he is able to ſtay and ſatisfie all our Love; and if ſo, then nothing ſo reaſonable, as that he ſhould have it all. We are therefore to Love him with all poſſible Application and Elevation of Spirit, with all the the *Heart*, *Soul* and *Mind*. We ſhould Collect and *Concenter* all the Rays of our our Love into this one *Point*, and lean towards God with the whole Weight of our Soul, as all that is ponderous in Nature, tends

with its *whole* Weight toward the *Center*. And this we ſhould do as *directly* as may be, with as little *warping* and declenſion toward the Creature as is poſſible. For ſo alſo 'tis to be obſerv'd in Nature, that not only all Weight or *Pondus* tends toward the Center, but that alſo it moves thither as nigh as it can, in a *direct* and *perpendicular* Line.

The PRAYER.

MY God, my Happineſs, who art fairer than the Children of Men, *and who thy ſelf art very Love, as well as* altogether lovely, draw me and I will run after thee. *O wind up my Soul to the higheſt pitch of Love that my Faculties will bear, and let me never alienate any degree of that noble Paſſion from thee its only due Object. Quench in me all terrene Fires and ſenſual Reliſhes, and do thou wound me deep, and ſtrike me through with the Arrows of a Divine Paſſion, that as thou art all Beauty and Perfection, ſo I may be all* Love and Devotion. My Heart is ready, O God, my Heart is ready *for a Burnt offering; ſend down then an Holy Fire from above to kindle the Sacrifice, and do thou continually fan and keek alive, and clarifie the Flame, that I may be ever Aſcending up to thee, in devout Breathings, and pious Aſpirations, till at length I aſcend in Spirit to the Element of Love, where I ſhall know thee more clearly, and love thee more Seraphically, and receive thoſe peculiar Coronets of Glory thou haſt reſerv'd for thoſe that Eminently love thee, Amen.*

Con-

CONTEMPLATION VI.

The Second Corollary: That therefore God is ultimately to be referr'd to in all our Actions; and that he is not to be uſed by us, but enjoyed.

1. AS there is nothing of greater and more Univerſal Moment to the regular Ordination of Human Life, than rightly to accommodate the Means and the End, and to make them Uniform and *Symbolical*; ſo is there nothing wherein Men are more Univerſally Peccant and Defective, and that not only in *Practice*, but alſo in *Notion* and *Theory*.

2. For altho' to do an ill Action for a good End, and to do a good Action for an ill End, are generally acknowledg'd alike Criminal; yet concerning this later, 'tis obſervable, That Men uſually think the Morality of their Actions ſufficiently ſecured, if the End propoſed be not in its own Nature *ſpecifically* Evil. Whereas indeed, there is yet another way whereby an End may become Evil, namely, by being reſted in, when 'tis not the laſt, without any further reſpect or reference. By this undue and *ill-plac'd* Acquieſcence, an End that is otherwiſe in its own intrinſic nature Good, upon the whole commences Evil. For tho' it be good to be choſen, it is yet ill to be reſted in.

3. For indeed 'tis againſt the Order and Oeconomy of things, as well as againſt the Perfection of *Religion*, That any End ſhould be ultimately reſted in, but what is truly the laſt. Now the laſt End of Action, can be no other than that which is

the laſt End of the *Will*; which is, the *Spring* of *Action*. This therefore being God (as appears from what I have already contemplated) it follows, That he ought to be the ultimate End of all our Actions; that we ought not in any of our Motions to ſtop ſhort of this Center, but in all our Actions, to make a further reference either actual or habitual; and according to that of the Apoſtle, *Whether we eat or drink, to do all to the Glory of God.*

4. For what can be more abſurd and incongruous, than to turn the Means into the End, and the End into the Means; to enjoy what ought to be only uſed, and to uſe what ought to be enjoyed? God is our laſt *End*, and therefore muſt not be deſired for any thing but himſelf, nor uſed as a means to accompliſh any other Deſign. Which alſo, concludes againſt all thoſe who make Religion a point of Secular Intereſt, and a Tool of *State-policy*, whereas that ought to preſcribe, and not receive Meaſures from any *Human* Affairs.

The PRAYER.

MY God, my Happineſs, who art the laſt End of my Deſires, *the very utmoſt of all Perfection, and beyond whom there is no Good; be thou the laſt End of my* Actions *too, and let them all meet and unite in thee, as* Lines *in their* Center. *Grant, I may ſet thee before me in all my Thoughts, Words and Actions; let my Eye of Contemplation be always open, and whatever* intermedial *Deſigns I may have, let my laſt Aim be thy* Glory. *And, O let me never be ſo low ſunk, baſe*

baſe and wicked, as to make Religion an Inſtrument of Worldly Policy, nor to diſhonour thee and my own Soul, by ſuch a mercenary *Piety. But do thou always poſſeſs my Mind with ſuch a due Value for thy infinite Excellency, that I may refer all things to Thee, and Thee and Thine to nothing, but Love and Embrace Thee for Thy own ſelf, who in Thy ſelf alone art* altogether lovely, Amen, Amen.

A Diſcourſe upon *Rom.* 12. 3.

——Not to think of himſelf more highly than he ought to think; but to think ſoberly, according as God hath dealt to every Man the Meaſure of Faith.

1. THere is nothing wherein Men are ſo much *divided* from one another, as in *Opinions*; and nothing wherein they more unanimouſly *conſpire*, than in *thinking well* of *themſelves*. This is a Humour of ſo *Catholic* a *Stamp*, and Univerſal *Empire*, that it may ſeem to Challenge a place among thoſe *Elements* of our Conſtitution, thoſe *Eſſentials* of our Nature which run throughout the whole Kind; and are participated by every *Individual*. For ſhould a Man *take the Wings of the Morning*, and Travel with the Sun round the Terreſtrial Globe, he would hardly find a Man either of a *Judgment* ſo difficult to be *pleas'd*, or of *Accompliſhment* ſo little to recommend him, that was not notwithſtanding ſufficiently in Love with himſelf, however he might diſlike every thing elſe about him; and without queſtion, that arrogant and peeviſh *Mathematician* who charged the grand *Architect* with want of Skill in the *Mechaniſm* of the World, thought he had play'd the *Artiſt* well enough in *himſelf*; and as to the *Harmony* of his own frame, acquitted the *Geometry* of his Maker.

2. And

2. And as Men are thus naturally apt to think well of themſelves in general, ſo there is nothing wherein they indulge this Humour more, than in the Opinion they have of the *Goods* of the *Mind*; and among theſe, there is none which has ſo great a ſhare of their *Partiality*, as their *Intellectual* Faculty. The Deſire of Knowledge is not more Natural, than the Conceit that we are already furniſh'd with a conſiderable Meaſure of it; and tho' a particular *Sect* were Characteriz'd by that Appellation, yet all Mankind are in reality, *Gnoſtics*. For as 'tis (ingeniouſly obſerv'd by the excellent *Carteſius*) nothing is more equally diſtributed among Men than the *Intellectual Talent*, wherewith every one fancies himſelf ſo abundantly ſtock'd, that even thoſe who have the moſt unſatiable Deſires, and whom Providence could not ſatisfie in any one thing elſe, are notwithſtanding, as to this *Diſpenſation* of Heaven, well enough content, complain not of the dull Planet that influenc'd their Nativity, or wiſh their Minds more richly endow'd than they are. And altho' there are a *generation* of Men who uſe to be very eloquent in ſetting out the degeneracy of Human Nature in general, and particularly in decyphering the *Shortneſs* of our *Intellectual Sight*, and the Defects of our now diminiſh'd Underſtanding, yet ſhould a Man take them at their Word, and apply that *Verdict* to themſelves in particular, which they ſo freely beſtow upon the whole Species, no Men in the World ſo full of reſentment and impatience as they; and I dare affirm, notwithſtanding their *Harangues* upon the Corruption of Human Nature, could

Diſſert. de Method p. 1.

could all Mankind lay a true Claim to that *Eſtimate* which they paſs upon themſelves, there would be little or no difference betwixt laps'd and perfect Humanity; and God might again review his *Image* with *paternal* Complacency, and ſtill *pronounce* it *good*.

3. Nor is it at all to be wonder'd, that *Self-Conceitedneſs* ſhould be of ſuch an unlimited and *Tranſcendental* Nature, as to run through all Sorts and Claſſes of Men, ſince the cauſe of it, *Self-love*, has ſuch an univerſal *Jurisdiction* in our Hearts. 'Tis moſt natural and neceſſary for every Man (and indeed for every Intelligent Being) to be a lover of himſelf; and to Covet whatſoever any way tends to the Perfection of his Nature. And as 'tis neceſſary for every Man to be thus affected towards himſelf, ſo is this the only Diſpoſition of Mind wherein Man acts with Conſtancy and *Uniformity*. Our other Paſſions have ſometimes their total intermiſſions, and at beſt their increaſes and decreaſes; but this is always at *Full*, and ſtands drawn out to the utmoſt *Stretch* of its Capacity. No Man loves himſelf more at one time than at another, and that becauſe he always loves himſelf in the higheſt Degree that is poſſible. More than all good he cannot wiſh to himſelf, and leſs than all he will not; nay, I had almoſt pronounced it impoſſible for Omnipotence it ſelf, which *ſtays the proud Waves* of the Ocean, and blocks up its violent Efforts with *Barrs and Doors*, to ſay unto this Paſſion, *Hitherto ſhalt thou come but no further*, Job. 38. 10. or to ſet any other Bounds to it beſides thoſe of all poſſible good.

4. Now

4. Now Man being ſuch an *infinite* Lover of himſelf, is eaſily brought to believe that he is really Maſter of many of thoſe Excellencies and Perfections which he ſo paſſionately wiſhes among the *Inventory* of his Poſſeſſions. For there is this notorious difference betwixt *Self-love* and the *Love* of *others*, that whereas the Love of others ſuppoſes an Opinion of their Excellency, the Love of our ſelves *begets* it. We *Love* others becauſe we *think well* of them, but (ſo prepoſterous is the method of Self-love) we think well of our ſelves becauſe we firſt Love our ſelves. So that now upon the whole, conſidering how neceſſarily and vehemently every Man is carried on to the Love of himſelf, and what a natural product Self-conceit is of Self-love, 'tis much to be fear'd, that as we cannot ſet any Bounds to the *love* of our ſelves, ſo we ſhall hardly ſet due ones to our *Opinions* of our ſelves; and conſequently, the moſt mortify'd and reſign'd Man of us all, has no reaſon to think himſelf unconcern'd in this Admonition of the Apoſtle ---*Not to think of himſelf more highly than he ought to think*; *but to think ſoberly, according as God hath dealt to every Man the Meaſure of Faith.*

5. 'Tis ſuppoſed that the Apoſtle in theſe words, had reſpect to the then prevailing Hereſie of the *Gnoſticks*, a ſort of Men that pretended to great *Heights* of Divine Knowledge, to cloſe Intimacies and Familiarities with God; and upon that preſumption grew ſo haughty and inſolent, as to *deſpiſe Dominions and ſpeak evil of Dignities*; and withal ſo careleſs and ſecure, as to *defile the Fleſh*, and indulge themſelves in all manner of Senſuality; as you may ſee their Character in the Epiſtle of St. *Jude.*

Jude. Nay, of ſuch turbulent ungovernable Principles, and profligate Manners were theſe Men, that ſome of the Learned (and particularly an eminent Divine of our own Church) have adventured to Write upon their Foreheads, *Myſtery*, and to place them in the *Chair* of *Anti-Chriſt*. As an Antidote therefore againſt this Poiſon, the Apoſtle (2 Cor. 12. 7.) who through the *Abundance of Revelation* had himſelf been in danger of being *exalted above Meaſure*, and experimentally knew how prone Human Nature is to ſwell and plume upon a Conceit of its own Excellencies, thought it expedient to adviſe his Charge at *Rome* (the place which *Simon Magus* the Author of that Sect had (as *Eſebius* tells us, *Hiſt. Eccleſ. l. 2. cap.* 13. made choice of to be the *Scene* of his Magical Operations) to moderate and ſober Thoughts of themſelves; and being to teach them a Leſſon of Humility, he modeſtly uſhers it in with a Preface of his Commiſſion and Authority. *For I ſay* (ſays he) *through the Grace given unto me, to every Man that is among you, not to think of himſelf more highly*, &c.

Dr. Hammond.

6. The Diſcourſe which I deſign upon theſe words ſhall be compriſed within theſe limits:

Firſt, I obſerve, That we are not at our own liberty, to entertain what Opinions we pleaſe concerning our ſelves; but that we ought to regulate them by ſome Standard. Which I Collect from the former part of the Text, *Not to think himſelf more highly than he ought to think, but to think ſoberly.*

7. *Second-*

7. *Secondly*, I obſerve, That the Standard whereby we are to regulate our Opinions concerning our ſelves, are thoſe Excellencies and Perfections which we are really indow'd with; which I Collect from the later part of the Text, *According as God has dealt to every Man the Meaſure of Faith.*

8. And in the *third* place, I ſhall conſider the Abſurdities and ill Conſequences of tranſgreſſing this *Standard*; whereby it ſhall appear how highly reaſonable this *Admonition* of the Apoſtle is; and ſo conclude with a practical Application of the whole in relation to our ſelves, and the preſent occaſion.

9. I begin with the firſt Propoſition, *That we are not at our own liberty to entertain what Opinions we pleaſe concerning our ſelves; but that we ought to regulate them by ſome Standard.*

10. The Acts of the *Underſtanding* are by ſome Men thought as free from all *Law*, as the Acts of the *Will* are from all *Neceſſity*; and accordingly they give every one a *Toleration* to *abound in his own ſenſe*, and (provided his *Actions* be conformable to the Rule) to *Think* what he pleaſe. Now ſince a Man cannot be accountable for an *Opinion* of *himſelf* in particular, unleſs it be firſt granted that he is under a Law, as to the Acts of his *underſtanding* in general, before I can proceed any farther, I find it neceſſary to lay down this *Preparatory* Poſition, That we are under an Obligation as to the Acts of our Underſtanding, or (which is all one) that we are Countable for them. Nay, I believe I may venture higher, and affirm, That the Underſtanding is not only under Obligation, but that 'tis the *Pri-*

mary

mary and *immediate* Subject of it. For the proof of which Paradox, I desire the Patrons of the *Intellectual Libertiniſm* to consider, that that must be the Primary and immediate Subject of all *Obligation* which is so of *Liberty*. Now that this cannot be the *Will*, I suppose will be acknowledg'd a clear Consequence, if the Will necessarily follows the Practical Dictate of the Understanding. And that it does so, I think there is *Demonstration*.

11. Tis an unquestionable Axiom in all the Schools of Learning in the World, That the Object of the Will is *apparent* Good: Now apparent Good in other words, is that which is apprehended or judg'd to be Good; and if so, then it follows, that the Will cannot but Conform to the Dictate of the Understanding; because otherwise, something might be the Object of the Will that is not apprehended Good; which is contrary to the supposition. In short, the Will (as *Aquinas* has well expressed it) is the *Conclusion* of an *Operative Syllogism*; and follows as necessarily from the Dictate of the Understanding, as any other Conclusion does from its Premises; and consequently, cannot be the *immediate* subject of Liberty; and consequently, not of Obligation.

12. But then are we not involv'd in the same difficulty as to the *Understanding*? Does not that act with equal (if not more) Necessity than the *Will*? So I know it is ordinarily taught. But if this be absolutely and universally true, I must confess it above the reach of my Capacity to salve the Notion of Morality, or Religion; or to find out an Expedient how the *Foundations* of the *Intellectual* World

World ſhould not be *out of courſe*. For ſince 'tis evident, both from the preceding Demonſtration, and from experimental Reflection, that the Will neceſſarily acts in Conformity to the Dictates of the Underſtanding, if thoſe very Dictates are alſo wholly and altogether neceſſary, there can be no ſuch thing as a τὸ ἐφ' ἡμῖν, The Man is bound Hand and Foot, has nothing left whereby to render him a Moral Agent, to qualifie him for Law or Obligation, Virtue or Vice, Reward or Puniſhment. But theſe are Abſurdities not to be endured; and therefore I conclude, acccording to the Rules of right Reaſoning, the *Principle* from which they flow to be ſo too.

13. To clear up then the whole Difficulty with as much Brevity and Perſpicuity as in a matter of this Intricacy is poſſible, I ſhall no longer conſider the Underſtanding and Will as Faculties really diſtinct either from the Soul it ſelf, or from one another, but that the Soul does immediately Underſtand and Will by it ſelf, without the Intervention of any Faculty whatſoever. And that for this demonſtrative Reaſon in ſhort, Becauſe in the contrary Hypotheſis, either *Judgment* muſt be aſcribed to the Will, and then the Will immediately commences Underſtanding, or the Aſſent of the Will muſt be blind, brutiſh, and unaccountable; both which are as great Abſurdities, as they are true Conſequences. This being premiſed, I grant, that as the Soul neceſſarily Wills as ſhe Underſtands, ſo likewiſe does ſhe neceſſarily Underſtand as the Object appears. And thus far our ſight *terminates* in *Fatality*, and *Neceſſity* Bounds our *Horizon*. That then

then that muſt give us a *Proſpect* beyond it, muſt be this, That although the Soul neceſſarily Underſtands or Judges according to the Appearance of Things, yet that Things ſhould ſo appear (unleſs it be in Propoſitions that are ſelf-evident, as that the whole is greater than any one part, or the like) is not alike neceſſary, but depends upon the degrees of Advertency or Attention, which the Soul uſes; and which to uſe, either more or leſs, is fully and immediately in her own Power. And this indifferency of the Soul, as to attending or not attending, I take to be the only τὸ ἐφ ἡμῖν, the Bottom and Foundation into which the Morality of every Action muſt be at length reſolv'd. For a farther Proof, as well as Illuſtration of which Hypotheſis, let us apply it to a particular Caſe, and try how well it will anſwer the *Phænomena*. In the Caſe then of *Martyrdom*, I look upon Sin as an Evil; and not only ſo, but (while I attend fully to its Nature) the greateſt of Evils. And as long as I continue this Judgment, 'tis utterly impoſſible I ſhould Commit it; there being according to my preſent Apprehenſion, no greater Evil for the declining of which I ſhould think it eligible. But now the Evil of *Pain* being preſented before me, and I not ſufficiently attending to the Evil of Sin, this later appears to be the leſſer Evil of the two, and I accordingly *pro hic & nunc*, ſo pronounce it; and in Conformity to that Judgment, *neceſſarily* chuſe it. But becauſe 'twas abſolutely in my Power to have *attended* more heedfully, there was Liberty in the Principle, the Miſtake which influenc'd the Action was vincible; and conſequently, the

the Action it ſelf imputable. This *Hypotheſis*, however ſtrange it may ſeem to thoſe that have ſworn Faith and Allegiance to the Dictates of the Schools, I believe will be the more approv'd, the more it is examin'd; and that not only as rational and conſiſtent in it ſelf, but alſo as a Refuge from thoſe Abſurdities which attend the ordinary Solutions. Neither is this account wholly *unlicens'd* by Authority; for I find ſome Hints and Intimations of it in the * *School of Plato*, where the reaſon why thoſe middle ſort of Beings call'd *Heroes* are not ſo uniformly pure as the Ἀδύνατοι θεοί, or Νόες, is aſſign'd to be, becauſe they do not ſo equally attend to the *Beauty* of the *Supream Good*

* *See* Hierocles *upon the Golden Verſes of* Pythagoras.

14. From what has been ſaid it appears plainly, That the Morality of every Human Action muſt be at length reſolv'd into an immediate indifference that the Soul has of *attending*, or not *attending*; and conſequently; that we are not only under Obligation as to the Acts of the Underſtanding, but that all Obligation begins there.

15. Having thus clear'd the way by the Proof of this Preparatory Poſition, That we are under Obligation as to the Acts of the Underſtanding in general. I may now proceed to conſider, That our Opinion of our ſelves, is one of thoſe Acts of the Underſtanding which are ſubject to Law; or in other Terms, That *we are not at our own liberty to entertain what Opinions we pleaſe concerning our ſelves, but that we ought to regulate them by ſome Standard.* Now the general reaſon of this is, be-

cauſe 'tis of great moment and influence in relation to our Practice, what Opinion we entertain concerning our ſelves. Indeed, there are many acts of the Underſtanding which tho' Originally free, yet fall under no Obligation by reaſon of the *Indifferency* of the Matter; as in things of pure and naked Speculation. Theſe are the *unforbidden* Trees of the Garden; and here we may let looſe the Reins, and indulge our Thoughts the full Scope. Thus there is no danger of *Hereſie* in aſſerting or denying the *Antipodes*; nor is *Orthodoxy* concern'd, whether the *Moon* be *habitable*. But although to miſtake a Star be of no Conſequence to the *Theoriſt* that ſits immur'd in his Study, yet it may be to the *Pilot*, that is to *Steer* his *Courſe* by it. There are *other* Things which have a *Practical* Aſpect; and here 'tis not *indifferent* what we think, becauſe 'tis not *indifferent* what we do. Now among theſe the Opinion of our ſelves is to be reckon'd, as having a great Influence upon our well or ill demeaning our ſelves reſpectively; as will more minutely and particularly appear, when we come in the third and laſt place, to conſider the Abſurdities and ill Conſequences of tranſgreſſing the *Standard* preſcribed; and therefore I ſhall defer the further proſecution of it till then; and in the mean while, proceed to the ſecond *Obſervable*, Namely,

That the Standard whereby we are to regulate our Opinions concerning our ſelves, are thoſe Excellencies and Perfections which we are really endow'd with. Which is collected from theſe words, *According as God has dealt to every Man the meaſure of Faith.*

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16. In the former part of the Text there was indeed a Reſtraint laid upon our Opinions concerning our ſelves; but it was general only, and indefinite. But here the ground is meaſured out, and the Boundaries preciſely ſet. Μέτρον πίστεως, that's the great *Ecliptic Line*, which is to bound the Career of our moſt forward and *Self-indulging* Opinions. If we keep within this Compaſs, our motion is Natural and Regular, but if we ſlide never ſo little out of it, 'tis Unnatural and Portentous. Or to ſpeak with greater Simplicity, He that Judges of himſelf according to thoſe Excellencies, whether Moral or Intellectual, which he really has, does φρονεῖν εἰς τὸ σωφρονεῖν, *think ſoberly*; and he that thinks himſelf indow'd with any Kind or Degrees of Excellence which really he has not, does ὑπερφρονεῖν παρὸ δεῖ φρονεῖν, *think of himſelf more highly than he ought to think.*

17. Here then are Two things to be conſidered.

First, That we may proceed ſo *far* as this *Standard.*

And Secondly, That we may not go beyond it.

First, That we may proceed ſo far.

18. It has been taught by ſome of the ſevere Maſters of *Spiritual Mortification*, That we ought to take up the moſt low and abject Thoughts of our ſelves that are poſſible, to be conſcious of no manner of Excellency in our ſelves; and conſequently, not to be affected with the leaſt *Self-complacency*; That we ought to account our ſelves to be Nothing, to have Nothing, to be worth Nothing; but to be very *refuſe, and the off-ſcouring of all things*, 1 Cor. 4. 13. And this they call the *Myſtical Death*, or the *Spiritual Annihilation*. Now whatever degrees of

Excellency this may have (which I ſhall not now diſpute) 'tis moſt certain it can have nothing of *Duty*. For tho' it may, and oftentimes is, required of a Man to think the *Truth*, yet he can never be under an Obligation to be *miſtaken*. Beſides, 'Tis hard to conceive how any Man (eſpecially one that *dwells* much with himſelf, and heedfully reflects upon the Actings of his own Mind) ſhould be Maſter of any conſiderable Excellency, and yet not be Conſcious of it. And beſides, That very degree of Attention which is required, that a Man ſhould not think himſelf *more* Accompliſh'd than indeed he is, will alſo infallibly hinder him from thinking he is *leſs*. 'Tis true indeed, *Moſes* knew not that his Face ſhone, after he had been Converſing with God on the Mount. He ſaw not the Orb of Glory that ſtream'd from him; and wondred what it was that made him ſo dreadful to the People. But 'tis not ſo with the Soul, whoſe reflective Faculty will not fail to give her Information of her moſt retir'd and reſerv'd Accompliſhments. 'Tis not with the *leſſer*, as with the *Greater* World, where whole Tracts and Regions (and thoſe ſome of the beſt too) lye undiſcovered. No, Man cannot be ſuch a *Stranger* to his own Perfections, ſuch an *America* to himſelf. For *who can know the things of a Man, if not the Spirit of Man which is in him?* And accordingly we find, that the *ignorance* of our ſelves, with which Mankind has been hetherto ſo univerſally tax'd, runs quite in another Channel, and does not conſiſt in *overlooking* any of thoſe Indowments which we *have*; but in *aſſuming* to our ſelves thoſe which we *have not*.

19. I confeſs (were it poſſible) I ſhould think it adviſable for ſome Perſons to be ignorant of ſome of their Excellencies, and like the Sun, not to *reflect* home to their own *Sphere* of *Light*; Not that I think it in the leaſt *unlawful* to be fully Conſcious of ones own Worth, but only I conſider, that ſome Men have not Heads ſtrong enough to *endure* Heights, and walk upon *Spires* and *Pinnacles*. But if they can ſtand there without growing *vertiginous*, they need not queſtion the lawfulneſs of the *Station*; they are ſtill within the *Region* of *Humility*. For 'tis not every thinking well of ones ſelf, that falls in with the Notion of *Pride*; but only when there is more of *Opinion* than there is of Worth. 'Twas this that was the Condemnation of the Apoſtate Angel, not that he took a juſt Complacency in the Eminency of his Station, but that he vainly arrogated to himſelf what was not his *due*, in that he ſaid, *I will Aſcend into Heaven, I will exalt my Throne above the Stars of God, I will ſit upon the ſides of the North, I will aſcend above the heights of the Clouds, I will be like the moſt High*, Iſa. 14. 13. 'Twas for this that the Angel of *Death* drew upon *Herod*, not becauſe he was pleaſed with the *fineneſs* and *ſucceſs* of his Oratory, but becauſe he was not ſo *juſt* to *God* as the People were to *him*, but lookt upon himſelf as the *Head-fountain* of his own Perfections, and ſo *gave not God* the *Glory*, Act. 12. 23.

20. But now if we take Care to proportion our Eſtimation *of*, and our Complacencies *in* our ſelves to the meaſure of our Endowments, and if we look upon thoſe very Endowments not as *originary* and independent, but as *derivative* from the *Father* of

Lights, from whom every good and perfect gift deſcends, Jam. 1. 17. and accordingly refer all to God's Glory, and with the Elders of the Revelations, take off our Crowns from our Heads and caſt them at the foot of the Throne, we have not only the expreſs words of the Text, but likewiſe, all the Reaſon in the World to warrant the *Sobriety* of our Opinions. For, this is but to have a right and exact Underſtanding of ones ſelf. And why may not a Man be allowed to take a true Eſtimate of himſelf, as well as of another Man? Or, why ſhould a Man think an Excellency leſs valuable, becauſe 'tis in himſelf? The Happineſs of God conſiſts in ſeeing himſelf *as he is*; he reflects upon the *Beauty* of his Eſſence, and rejoyces with an infinite *Complacency*. Now certainly, that wherein conſiſts the *Happineſs* of the *Creator*, cannot be a *Sin* in the *Creature*. Beſides, I would fain know why a Man may not as lawfully think well of himſelf upon the Score of his real Worth, as *deſire* that *others* ſhould think well of him for the ſame Reaſon? And that he may do, the later is confeſſed as well by the *Practice*, as by the common *Suffrage* of Mankind. For otherwiſe, what becomes of that *good Reputation* which *Solomon* ſays, *is rather to be choſen than great Riches*; Prov. 22. 1. and of which the beſt and wiſeſt Men of all Ages, had ever ſuch a tender, ſuch a Paſſionate Regard? Nay, 'tis look'd upon as a very *commendable* thing to be ſo affected; and the contrary is cenſured as the mark of a diſſolute and *unmoraliz'd* Temper. Only there is a Μέτρον τῦ Καιρόυ, to be obſerv'd in this as well as in the former, and as we are not to *ſtretch out our ſelves beyond our Meaſure*, 2 Cor. 10. 13. ſo

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muſt we take care with the great Apoſtle, not to give *others* occaſion to *think of us above that which they ſee us to be*, 2 Cor. 12. 6. Beſides, if we may not be allow'd to *take the* full *Height* of our own Excellencies, how ſhall we be able to give God thanks for them? The *Elders* muſt know they *wear Crowns*, before they can uſe them as Inſtruments of Adoration; and *Herod* muſt be Conſcious of the right *Genius* of his Oratory, before he *can give God the Glory*. Again, in the laſt place, if a Man may not have leave to take Cognizance of his own Deſerts, and to Value himſelf accordingly, what will become of that συνειδήσεως ἀγαθῆς ἐπερώτημα εἰς Θεόν which the Apoſtle ſpeaks of, *the anſwer of a good Conſcience towards God*, 1 Pet. 3. 21. which is nothing elſe but a Sentence of Approbation, which a Man paſſes upon himſelf for the well managing of that *Talent* of Liberty which God has entruſted him with? Now this is the *Reward* of Virtue, and therefore certainly not *contrary* to it.

21. Neither is this *Self-eſteem* only the *Reward* of Virtue but alſo the *Cauſe* of it too; and conſequently 'tis not only *allowable*, but alſo highly *needful*, that we ſhould think *Honourably* of our ſelves. 'Tis a frequent Obſervation among *Moral* and *Divine* Writers, that moſt, if not all the Sins which Men commit, proceed from want of a due Senſe of the Dignity of their Nature. And conſequently, a due reflection upon a Man's own Worth, muſt needs be a ſtrong *Preſervative* againſt whatſoever would *ſtain* its Glory. *Shall ſuch a Man as I flee?* was the powerful Conſideration that *buoy'd* up the *ſinking* Spirits of *Nehemiah*. And 'tis one of the *Capital* Pre-

cepts of *Pythagoras*'s Morals (and perhaps one of the beſt too that was ever given to the World) ——Πάντων μάλιστα αἰσχύνεο σαυτόν. *Above all things reverence thy ſelf.* And 'twas the Saying of another of the Sons of Wiſdom, *Let not the Reverence of any Man cauſe thee to ſin.* Which it certainly will do, unleſs we obſerve the former Rule, and reflect with due *Reverence* upon our own Worth and Dignity.

22. From theſe Conſiderations (not to urge any more) it ſeems to me very evident, That 'tis not only *Lawful*, but in ſome reſpects highly *Expedient*, that our Opinions of our ſelves ſhould riſe up ſo as to be of a *Level* with our Excellencies, whatſoever they are. Let one of the Scales be mounted never ſo *high*, yet if there be a proportionable *Weight* in the *other*, the Ballance moves regularly, and as it ſhould do. We may then proceed ſo far as this *Standard*.

23. But Secondly, We muſt not go *beyond* it. For all beyond this is *Pride*. Pride, that turn'd the Angels out of Heaven, *Adam* out of Paradiſe, and levell'd the great King of *Babylon* with the *Beaſts* that *Periſh*; and which is nothing elſe but an *Intemperate* Opinion of our ſelves, which conſiſts either in aſſuming to our ſelves any Excellency which we have not, or in *Over-rating* what we have. Tho' indeed in *Strictneſs* of Notion, this later falls in with the former: For to *Over-rate* what we have, is indeed to aſſume ſome *Degree* of good which we have not. Here then begins our Reſtraint, the *Reaſonableneſs* of which will appear from the Abſurdities and ill Conſequences which attends the tranſgreſſing of this *Standard*; and which in the third and laſt place, I come now to conſider.

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24. I ſhall obſerve only the moſt notorious; and theſe I ſhall reduce to theſe Three general Heads.

Firſt, That it unqualifies us for the performance of many Duties.

Secondly, That it betrays us into many Sins.

And Thirdly, That it fruſtrates all methods of Reformation. Of theſe very briefly.

25. Firſt, An exceſſive Opinion of our ſelves (and that is ſo which ſurpaſſes the meaſure of our real Worth) unqualifies us for the performance of many Duties; and that both in Relation to God, our Neighbour, and our ſelves.

Firſt, in relation to God.

26. As *Folly* leads to *Atheiſm*, ſo does an *overweaning* Opinion of our own *Wiſdom*, or any other Excellency, to *Profaneneſs*. For as *the Fool has ſaid in his Heart, there is no God*, ſo it is ſaid in another place, That the *ungodly is ſo Proud that he careth not for him*, Pſal. 10. 4. Pride then is altogether inconſiſtent with that Subjection, Honour and Veneration which we owe to God. For how can he ſubmit his Paſſions to the *Authority* of the *Divine Will*, who has made a *Law* of his *own?* And as it indiſpoſes us for all *active*, ſo likewiſe for all *paſſive* Obedience; for how can he *ſuffer* that with *Patience*, which he thinks he does not *deſerve* in *Juſtice?* Or how can he ſubmit with *Reſignation* to the ſeeming unevenneſs of Providential Diſpenſations, the equality of which becauſe he cannot *diſcern*, he muſt in *honour* to his own Underſtanding *deny?* And upon the ſame ground, it unqualifies us for *Faith* in many of the Divine Revelations. For how can he *Captivate* his Underſtanding to *Myſteries*, who thinks

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it a diſhonour to *own* any, and is reſolved to *Believe* no farther than he can *Comprehend?*

27. Laſtly, It unqualifies us for *Gratitude* towards God; and conſequently, puts a Bar to all thoſe good Actions which we would otherwiſe perform upon that *Principle.* And by this it becomes a *Multiplied*, a *Legion* Evil. For how can he acknowledge an Obligation paſſed upon him by God's *Favours*, who calls them not by that Name, but eſteems them as *Rewards* and *Payments*, and inverting the Proteſtation of the good *Patriarch*, Gen. 22. 16. thinks himſelf *worthy* of the *greateſt* of his *Mercies.*

28. Then Secondly, In relation to our Neighbour, it unqualifies us for Obedience to Civil Government. For how can he ſubmit to the Wiſdom of his Superiors, and pay an *implicite* Deference to the *Occult* Reaſons of State, who thinks himſelf Wiſer than a whole *Senate*, and diſputes even the ways of *Providence?* Pride was ever obſerved to be the Mother of Faction and Rebellion; and accordingly, St. *Jude* makes it part of the *Character* of the Proud *Gnoſtics*, *To deſpiſe Dominions, and ſpeak evil of Dignities.*

29. Again, It unqualifies us for thoſe Acts of Juſtice which conſiſt in due obſervation of our Neighbours Merits, and a deference of external Reſpects proportionable to that obſervation. For how can he be at *leiſure* to take notice of *anothers* Worth, who is ſo wholly taken up in the *Contemplation* of his *own?* Let the Reputation of his beſt Friends (if it be poſſible for a Proud Man to have any) be in never ſo great danger, he like *Archimedes*, is ſo over-

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buſie in admiring the Creatures of his own Brain, thoſe *Draughts* and *Ideas* which he has form'd of *himſelf* there, that he regards not the *Ruin* that is about him. Or if he does, he is ſo far from appearing in their defence (as in Juſtice he ought) that he rather rejoyces at their *Spots* as *Acceſſions* to his own *Brightneſs*.

30. Again, It unqualifies us for the Offices of Humanity, and Civil Behaviour, and all kinds of *Homilitical* Virtue: For how can he treat thoſe with any tolerable Civility, whom he looks down upon as a whole *Species* below him?

31. Laſtly, It unqualifies us for Gratitude toward our Benefactors. For how can he think himſelf obliged by *Man*, who counts *God* his *Debtor*.

32. Then Thirdly, In relation to our Selves, here is this grand ill Conſequence of an immoderate Self-eſteem, that it unqualifies us not only for higher Attainments, but even for the very *endeavours* of Improvement, and ſo cuts ſhort, and *bedwarfs* all our Excellencies. 'Tis the Obſervation of *Cicero*, *Multi ad ſcientiam perveniſſent niſi ſe jam perveniſſe credidiſſent*, The *Opinion* of the Proud Man has ſo far got the *ſtart* of the real *Worth*, that the later will never *overtake* the *former*.

33. And as the immoderate Eſteem of our Selves, unqualifies us for the performance of many Duties, ſo does it alſo, in the ſecond place, Betray us into many Sins.

34. Firſt, Into all thoſe Sins which are contrary to the forementioned Virtues reſpectively. And beſides them, into many more; ſuch as are Preſumption and Security, Vexation and Diſcontent, Contempt

tempt of others (tho' at the ſame time it expoſes us to theirs) Anger and Contention, Malice and Revenge. For the Proud Man is not content to be his own *private* Admirer, but quarrels with all others that are not of his Perſwaſion; and with the *Tyrant* of *Babylon*, kindles a *Fire* for thoſe who will not *fall down and Worſhip the Image which he has ſet up.*

35. Neither does the *Leproſie* ſtop here. But as it betrays us into many Sins, ſo in the Third and laſt place (which is the moſt diſmal Conſequence of all) it fruſtrates all Methods of Reformation. God's Judgments will but exaſperate and inrage him, becauſe he thinks he does *not* deſerve them; and his Mercies will not indear him, becauſe he thinks he *does*. *Advice* he thinks, he does not *need*, and *Reproof* he cannot *bear*. Beſides, he thinks ſo well of himſelf already, that he wonders what you *mean* by adviſing him to become *better*; and therefore as he does not endeavour after any of thoſe Excellencies which he thinks he has, ſo neither can he dream of mending thoſe Faults which he thinks he is not guilty of: Thus is the Man *Seal'd* up to Iniquity, and deeply *lodg'd* in the *ſtrong holds* of Sin, where nothing that has a Salutary Influence can come nigh him. And in this he reſembles the firſt *Preſidents* of his Folly, who from Angels transform'd themſelves into Devils, and fell beyond the *poſſibilities* of *Recovery.*

36. Theſe are ſome of the Fruits of this *Root of Bitterneſs*; and tho' more might be named, yet theſe I think ſufficient to juſtifie this Admonition of the *Apoſtle* to every Man, *not to think of himſelf more highly*

highly than he ought to think; but to think ſoberly, according as God has dealt to every Man the Meaſure of Faith. Let us then all Endeavour to conform our Opinions concerning our ſelves to this Standard. Let us not ſtretch our ſelves beyond our *natural dimenſions*, but learn to entertain modeſt and ſober thoughts of our own Excellencies and Endowments, and mortifie our *underſtandings* as well as our *ſenſitive affections*. And thus ſhall we compleat our Lent Exerciſe, by joyning the mortification of the Spirit to that of the Fleſh, without which the greateſt Auſterities wherewith we can afflict the latter, will not be *ſuch a Faſt as God has choſen*. For what will it avail to macerate the Body, while the principal Part, the Soul, remains unmortified? The Humility of *Moſes* muſt conſpire with his Forty Days Faſting, to qualifie a Man for Divine Intercourſes, to make him the Joy of Angels, the *Friend of God*. Thus then let us accompliſh the Refinings of our Souls, and fill up the Meaſure of our Mortifications. To which end, let us add this one further Conſideration to what has been already ſaid, That Humility, in the Judgment even of the *High and Lofty One that inhabits Eternity*, is a Virtue of ſuch great Excellency, and ſingular Advantage to the Happineſs of Mankind, that our Bleſſed Saviour came down from Heaven to teach it; that his whole Life was one continued Exerciſe of it, and that he has dignified it with the Firſt Place among his Beatitudes. Let us then, as many as profeſs the Religion of the Humble and Crucify'd JESUS, make it our ſtrict Care, that we neglect not this his great Commandment, nor omit to Copy out this

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Principal Line, this main Stroke of the Pattern he has ſet us. Eſpecially let us of this Place, who are ſet among the *greater Lights* of the Firmament, and whoſe Profeſſion and Buſineſs is to Contemplate Truth, and to think of Things as God made them, in *Number*, *Weight*, and *Meaſure*, labour in the firſt place to take juſt and true Meaſures of our Selves, that our *Knowledge puff us* not *up*, nor our Height become our *Ruin*.

Conſiderations

Considerations upon the Nature of Sin; Accommodated to the Ends both of *Speculation* and Practice.

Sect. I.

Of the division of Sin into Material and Formal; and of the reality and necessity of that Distinction.

1. TO make this our Discourse about Sin, more clear and distinct, before we enter upon its Nature, 'twill be requisite to premise something concerning the double Acceptation of the word. For nothing can be defined, before it be distinguished.

2. I observe therefore, That Sin may be considered either *abstractedly*, for the bare Act of Obliquity; or *concretely*, with such a special Dependence of it upon the Will, as renders the Agent *guilty*, or obnoxious to Punishment. I say, with such a *special* Dependence of it upon the Will; for not every dependence of an Action upon the Will, is sufficient to make it *imputable*, as shall be shewn hereafter. The former of these, by those that distinguish more nicely, is called *transgressio voluntatis*; the later, *transgressio voluntaria*; or according to the more ordinary distinction, the former is the *material*; the later, the *formal* Part of Sin.

3. This

3. This diſtinction is both *real* and *neceſſary*. 1. It is *real*, Becauſe the Idea or Conception of *material* Sin is not only diſtinct from the Idea of *formal* Sin, (as it may be in things really the ſame) but when conſidered as *alone* does poſitively exclude the other. For this Notion, *a bare act of obliquity*, does not only *preſcind from*, but alſo *poſitively deny* ſuch a ſpecial Dependence of it upon the Will, as makes it imputable for Puniſhment.

4. Now as it is a certain ſign of *Identity*, when the Idea of one thing neceſſarily includes the Idea of another; ſo is it of *real diſtinction*, when the Idea of one thing in any Caſe, poſitively excludes the Idea of the other. There may indeed, be diſtinct Conceptions of one and the ſame thing, whereof there are different Properties or Degrees; but then one does only *abſtract from*, and not in any Caſe *poſitively exclude* the other. Which when it does, it is an evident ſign of *real diſtinction*.

5. But the greateſt Argument of real Diſtinction, is *ſeparability* and *actual ſeparation*. For nothing can be ſeparated from it ſelf. And this alſo has place here. For the *material* Part of Sin, may actually exiſt without the *formal*. That is, there may be an Act of Obliquity, or an irregular Act, without any Guilt deriv'd upon the Agent; or to ſpeak more ſtrictly, without that *ſpecial* Dependence of the Act upon the Will, which is the *foundation* of that Guilt. This is evident in the Caſe of *Fools* and *Mad Men*.

6. And as this Diſtinction is *real*, ſo alſo is it very *uſeful* and *neceſſary*. 1*ſt*. In the *Notion*, to prevent Ambiguities and Fallacies, that might ariſe from the uſe of the word (Sin.) As when St. *John* ſays,

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He that commits Sin is of the Devil, John 3. 8. certainly 'twould be a Fallacy to argue hence, that every mere Act of Obliquity is *Diabolical*, becauſe a Sin; ſince not *material* but *formal* Sin, was the thing intended in St. *John's* Propoſition.

7. 2*ly*, In the *Thing*, for the honour and vindication of the Divine Attributes. Particularly, from the Damning of Infants merely for the Corruption of Nature, commonly call'd Original Sin; It being repugnant to the Meaſures of Juſtice, and the Dictates of Common Senſe, that the bare doing an irregular Act, or the bare having an irregular Propenſion, ſhould be *puniſhable at all*; much more, with *Eternal Damnation*; as it muſt be, if *every* Dependence of an Action upon the Will, be enough to render it imputable; that is, if every *material* be alſo a *formal* Sin. This I ſay would be very unjuſt, becauſe ſuch irregular Acts are no more a Man's own, than thoſe Committed by another Man.

8. But it is certain, that God does not proceed by ſuch Meaſures; as may be gathered from the Oeconomy of his ſevereſt Diſpenſation, the *Law*. For when he forbad Murther with ſuch ſtrictneſs and ſeverity, as to order the Murtherer to be taken from his Altar, and put to Death, yet he provided Cities of *Refuge* for the ſecurity of thoſe, who ignorantly or unwillingly had ſhed Human Blood, Deut. 19. Which may be alſo added as a further Confirmation, that *every* Dependence of an irrigular Act upon the Will, is not ſuch as derives Guilt upon the *willer*; and conſequently, that there is a real Diſtinction between *Material* and *Formal* Sin.

9. This Diſtinction I confeſs, is ſometimes other-

wiſe uſed, where the *material* of Sin is taken for all that is *Subſtantial* and *Poſitive* in the Act, not including the *Obliquity*, and the *formal* for the *Obliquity*, not including that *ſpecial* Dependence of it upon the Will which make it imputable. This I remember the Angelical Doctor diſtinguiſhes upon the Definition which St. *Auſtin* gives of Sin, that it is *Dictum, factum vel concupitum contra legem Dei æternam*, Prim. Secund. Quæſt. 71. Art. 6. Here, ſays he, St. *Auſtin* points out both the *matter* and the *form* of Sin. The *matter* in the *ſubſtance* of the Act, the *form* in the *Obliquity*, its Contrariety to the Law.

10. But it may be conſidered that *Aquinas* here, and all thoſe that ſo uſe the Phraſe, by the *matter* of Sin, intend only that which is equally *Common* both to *good* and *bad* Actions, the *ſubſtratum commune*, as the Schools call it; and by the *Form*, that which *ſpecifies* the Act otherwiſe indifferent, and gives it the *firſt* difference of Sin. And this indeed, is according to Propriety as well as the other. For the *material* Part of Sin is *compleat* Sin in its *kind*; and conſequently, muſt alſo conſiſt of its *matter* and form. But when Sin is conſidered according to its full *Latitude*, then the *irregular Act* goes for the *material*, and that *ſpecial* Dependence of it upon the Will which drives guilt upon the Agent for the *formal* Part of Sin. And in this Senſe I now conſider it.

Sect. II.

A more particular and explicite Conſideration of Material Sin, and what it adds to the general Nature of Evil.

1. After our Diſtinction of Sin into *Material* and *Formal*, and our juſtification of that Diſtinction, it follows, that in the next place, we give ſome more particular and explicit Account of the Nature of *Material* Sin. That it is an *irregular* Act in general, was intimated before; but to ſpeculate its Nature more thoroughly, we muſt ſet it in a clearer Light, and define what it is that makes an Action *irregular*. And the Account which I ſhall give of this, I ſhall ground upon that Definition of St. *John*, who tells us, That *Sin is a Tranſgreſſion of the Law*. So that *Tranſgreſſion of the Law*, is the *irregularity* of an Action, and is more explicitely, the *Material* Part of Sin.

2. Thus far in *general*. But now to make Tranſgreſſion of the Law fully adequate, and commenſurate to *Material* Sin, ſo as to extend to all kinds of it, it concerns us in the next place to enquire, What is here to be underſtood by (*Law*) and upon the right ſtating of this, will depend the whole *Theory* of *Material* Sin.

3. By Law therefore, in the firſt place, is to be underſtood that which is *Poſitive*; that is, any Rule of Action preſcribed to us by God, conſider'd only *as preſcribed*. Any Action ſo preſcribed, be it otherwiſe never ſo indifferent for the *Matter*, puts on the

force of a *Law* from the *Authority* of the Preſcriber; and every Tranſgreſſion of ſuch a Rule is *Sin*.

4. But the Tranſgreſſion of Law in this narrow Senſe of the word, will not comprehend all the kinds of *Material* Sin. For although Poſitive Law creates the firſt difference in *ſome* Things, yet it does not in *all*. For had God never made any *Poſitive* Law, yet the doing of *ſome* Actions would have been *Sin*; nay, there was *Sin* where there was no *Poſitive* Law; as may be probably Collected from the Fall of *Angels*. But where there is no Law, there is no Tranſgreſſion. There muſt be therefore ſome other Law, beſides *Poſitive* Law.

5. By Law therefore, 2ly. is to be underſtood the Law of *Reaſon*, that Candle of the Lord that Lights every Man that comes into the World in his Paſſage thro' it. This is Twofold. For *1ſt*. By the Law of Reaſon may be underſtood, that Original Stock of *rational Tendencies* or practical Sentiments, which prevent all Diſcourſe and Reaſonings about what is to be done; and Anſwer to *Speculative Principles*. For as the Animal and Senſitive Nature, is not only furniſh'd with Senſe and Perception, but alſo with certain con-natural Inſtincts and Impreſſions, whereby Animals are directed and declined to *ſenſitive good*; ſo for the guardianſhip and ſecurity of Virtue, againſt the danger, either of *Ignorance* or *Inadvertence*, God has furniſh'd the Rational Nature, not only with the Faculty of Reaſoning, but with certain Common Principles and Notions, whereby 'tis inclined to the Good of the *Reaſonable* Life. This is the ὁρμὴ ψυχῆς, ſo much talkt of; and that which Men generally mean by the *Law* of *Nature*.

6. Or

6. Or elſe 2*ly*, By the Law of Reaſon may be underſtood a Power, which a Rational Creature has of finding out by diſcourſing from Firſt Principles what is fit to be done, and of reflecting upon the Reaſonableneſs of thoſe Moral *Anticipations* and Impreſſions; which he *before* entertain'd, tho' he knew not upon what *ground*.

7. Theſe Two make up the adequate Notion of the *Law* of *Reaſon*; but we are not yet come to the adequate Notion of *Law*. For if the *Law* of *Reaſon* be taken in the firſt Senſe for a Stock of Moral *Anticipations* implanted by God in the Soul, this will be but another Branch of *Poſitive* Law. For *Light* of *Nature*, and *Light* of *Scripture*, are but different Modes of Divine Revelation; and neither of theſe can be the *ultimate* Reaſon, into which the Morality of every Action is to be reſolv'd.

8. But if the Law of *Reaſon* be taken in the later Senſe, for a Power which a Rational Creature has of finding out by Diſcourſe, what is Reaſonable to be done, this will of Neceſſity lead us *higher*; namely, to conſider that there are certain, antecedent, and independent *Aptneſſes* or Qualities in Things; with reſpect to which, they are fit to be commanded or forbidden by the Wiſe Governour of the World, in ſome *poſitive* Law; whether that of Internal, or External Revelation, or both.

9. We are therefore, in the next place, to reſolve theſe antecedent Aptneſſes of Things, into their proper *ground*; or to aſſign what that is which makes an Action *fit* to be *commanded*, or *forbidden*. Which when we have done, we are advanced as high as we can go; and have found out that Su-

preme, Eternal and Irreverſible Law, which preſcribes Meaſures to all the reſt, and is the *laſt* Reaſon of *Good* and *Evil*.

10. That therefore which makes an Action fit to be commanded or forbidden by the Wiſe Governour of the World, can be nothing elſe in *general*, but its reſpective tendency to promote, or hinder the Attainment of ſome certain *End* or other, which that *Governour* propoſes. For all Action being *for* ſome *End*, and not the End it *ſelf*, its aptneſs to be commanded or forbidden, muſt be founded upon its ſerviceableneſs or diſſerviceableneſs to ſome End. So much in general.

11. I further Conſider, That this End muſt be that which is ſimple and abſolutely the *beſt* and *greateſt*. For no other is Worthy of *God*. Now certainly, there is none better or greater, than the *univerſal Good* of the whole Syſteme of Things; which is therefore to be regarded, and proſecuted to the utmoſt, both by *God*, and all other *Intelligent* Beings.

12. And hence ariſes this firſt and great *Canon* or *Law*; That whatever naturally tends to the Promotion of the Common Intereſt, is *good*, and apt to be *commanded*: and whatever naturally tends to the Diſintereſt of the Public, is Evil, and apt to be *forbidden*. This is the great *Baſis* of Morality; the fixt and immutable Standard of Good and Evil; and the *fundamental* Law of Nature.

13. And becauſe there are ſome Actions *in ſpecie*, which with relation to the preſent Syſteme both of the Material and Intellectual World, have ſuch a *natural* Connexion with the furtherance or prejudice of this great End; therefore theſe by way of *Aſſumption*

tion, under the two *general* Propoſitions, are intrinſically and naturally *good* or *bad*; and are thereby differenc'd from thoſe that are made ſo only by *Arbitrary Conſtitution*. Though yet in one reſpect, *theſe* are Arbitrary too, in as much as they depend upon ſuch a particular *Hypotheſis* of the World which was *it ſelf* Arbitrary; and which if God ſhould at any Time change, the relations of Actions to the great End might change too; that which now *naturally* makes for the Common Advantage, might *as naturally* make *againſt* it; and conſequently, that which is now Good, might have been *then* Evil. But ſtill the two *great Hinges* of Morality, ſtand as fixt and as unvariable, as the two *Poles*; whatever is naturally Conducive to the Common Intereſt, is *Good*; and whatever has a contrary Influence, is *Evil*. *Theſe* are Propoſitions of Eternal and Unchangeable Verity; and which God can no more Cancel or Diſannul, than he can *deny himſelf*.

14. So that now to *analyze* the Immorality of any Action into its *laſt Principles*: If it be enquired, why ſuch an Action is to be avoided, the *immediate* Anſwer is, Becauſe 'tis *Sin*; If it be ask'd, why 'tis *Sin*; the *immediate* Anſwer is, Becauſe 'tis *forbidden*; if why forbidden, Becauſe 'twas in it ſelf *fit* to be forbidden; if why fit, Becauſe *naturally* apt to *prejudice* the Common Intereſt: if it be ask'd, Why the natural aptneſs of a Thing to prejudice the Common Intereſt, ſhould make it fit to be forbidden, the Anſwer is, Becauſe the *Common Intereſt* is above all Things, to be *regarded* and proſecuted: If farther, a Reaſon be demanded of this, there can no

other be given, but becauſe 'tis the *beſt* and *greateſt End*; and conſequently, is to be deſired and proſecuted, not for the ſake of any *thing elſe*, but purely for it *ſelf*.

15. So that now the *laſt* Law whereof Sin is a *Tranſgreſſion*, is this *great* and *ſupreme* Law concerning the proſecution of the *Common Intereſt*. And every Sin is ſome way or other, directly or indirectly, a Tranſgreſſion of this Law. Thoſe againſt any *Moral* Precept, *directly*; and thoſe againſt a Precept merely *Poſitive*, *indirectly*; becauſe 'tis for the Common Good, that the Supreme Authority be acknowledg'd and ſubmitted to; let the *inſtance* wherein Obedience is required, be in it *ſelf* never ſo *indifferent*.

16. If it be now objected, That according to theſe Meaſures there will be no difference between *Moral* and *Phyſical* Evil, contrary to the Common Diſtinction between *malum Turpe*, and *malum Noxium*; the one as oppoſed to *bonum utile*, and the other as oppoſed to *bonum honeſtum*; I Anſwer, That I know of no Good or Evil, but of the *End*, and of the *Means*. Good of the End, is what we call *bonum jucundum*; Good of the Means, is what we call *utile*. Evil of the End there is properly none; but that only is Evil, which is prejudicial to it. Indeed the old Maſters of Morality diſcours'd of Moral Good and Evil as of *abſolute Natures*; and accordingly, nothing ſo common among them, as to talk of *Eſſential Rectitudes*, and *Eſſential Turpitudes*. But I think it greater Accuracy to ſay, That Moral Good and Evil are *Relative* Things; that *bonum honeſtum* is one and the ſame with that which is truly *utile*; and that *malum turpe*, is that which is naturally againſt the Profit of the

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Community. And herein I aſſert no more than what the great Maſter of the Latin Philoſophy and Eloquence, profeſſedly Contends for throughout the whole Third Book of his Offices. And therefore, inſtead of evading the Objection, I freely own its Charge; and affirm, That there is no difference between Moral and Phyſical Evil, any otherwiſe, than that Phyſical Evil extends to all Things in Nature which obſtruct Happineſs; whereas Moral Evil is appropriated to Actions that do ſo.

Sect. III.

The Second Part of the Diſcourſe, which briefly treats of Formal Sin; with the Requiſites neceſſary to its Conſtitution. Where alſo 'tis enquired, Whether the Nature of Sin be Poſitive or Privative.

1. WE are now come to the Second Part of our Diſcourſe, where we are to Treat of the Nature of Formal Sin, that is, of Sin conſider'd not *abſtractedly* for the mere Act of Obliquity, but Concretely, with ſuch a ſpecial Dependence of it upon the Will, as ſerves to render the Agent guilty, or obnoxious to Puniſhment.

2. And here, the firſt Thing to be obſerv'd is, That altho material Sin does neither in its Notion, nor in its Exiſtence, include formal Sin, yet formal Sin does always include the other. Tho' there may be a Tranſgreſſion of the Law without formal Sin, yet the later always ſuppoſes the former; and as St. *John* ſays, *Whoſoever committeth Sin, tranſgreſſes alſo the Law*, Joh. 3.4.

3. But

3. But that which formal Sin adds over and above to material, and under whoſe reſpect we are now to conſider it, is the Connotation of that ſpecial Dependence of it upon the Will, which derives Guilt upon the Agent. So that for a Definition of formal Sin, we may ſay, That it is an irregular Action, or a Tranſgreſſion of the Law; ſo depending upon the Will, as to make the Agent liable to Puniſhment. This is in the Phraſe of St. *John*, ἔχειν ἁμαρτίαν, to *have* Sin; that is, ſo as to be accountable for it; for he ſpeaks of that Sin which upon Confeſſion, God is *faithful and juſt to forgive*; and conſequently not of material, (for where there is no Guilt, there can be no Remiſſion) but of formal Sin.

4. From this general Notion of formal Sin, proceed we to enquire, what that ſpecial Dependence is that makes an irregular Action formally a Sin. And here 'tis in the firſt place ſuppoſed, that not every Dependence of an Action upon the Will, is ſufficient to make it imputable. And with very good reaſon. For otherwiſe, the Actions of Infants, Fools and Mad-men, would be imputable; for theſe (as indeed all Actions) have ſome dependence upon the Will; at leaſt, as a *Phyſical Principle*.

5. To be poſitive therefore, that an irregular Action may ſo depend upon the Will, as to derive Guilt upon the Agent, 'tis neceſſary firſt, that it proceed from the Will as from a free Principle; Free not only in oppoſition to Coaction, (for ſo all the actions of the Will are free) but in oppoſition to Neceſſity, or determination to one part of the Contradiction. That is, in one word, 'tis neceſſary to the imputableneſs of an Action, that it be avoidable.

able. To this purpoſe is that common ſaying of St. *Auſtin*, *Nemo peccat* (that is, *formaliter*) *in eo quod vitare non poteſt*: And great reaſon the Father had to ſay ſo; for he that cannot avoid tranſgreſſing the Law, is not ſo much as capable of being obliged by it, (becauſe no Man can be obliged to what is impoſſible) and if he be not obliged by it, certainly he cannot Morally and Formally break it. A thing which the Patrons of *Phyſical Predetermination* would do well to conſider.

6. But when I make it neceſſary to the imputableneſs of an Action, that it be freely exerted, I would not be underſtood of an immediate Freeneſs. For certainly thoſe rooted and confirm'd Sinners, who have by long uſe reduced themſelves under a neceſſity of Sinning, are never the more excuſable for the Impotence they have Contracted. If there was Liberty in the Principle 'tis ſufficient.

7. The next requiſite, and that which gives the laſt and finiſhing ſtroke to Formal Sin, is, that it proceed from the Will, *ſufficiently inſtructed* by the Underſtanding. That is, to make a Man Sin formally, 'tis requiſite that he has not only a Power of avoiding that Action which is a Tranſgreſſion of the Law, but that he alſo know it to be a Tranſgreſſion of the Law; at leaſt, that he be in a Capacity ſo to do; that ſo he may be induced to Exert that Power. And 'tis alſo neceſſary, that he know that he Commits it; that is, he muſt have, or at leaſt, be in a Capacity of having, both *notitia Juris*, and *notitia Facti*.

8. The former of theſe depends upon that Common Principle, That Laws do not oblige till they

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are publiſh'd; according to that known Maxim of the Canon Law, *Leges conſtituuntur cum promulgantur*; and that of the *Civilians*, *Leges quæ conſtringunt hominum vitas, intelligi ab omnibus debent.* And the later alſo depends upon the Equity of the ſame Principle, tho' ſomewhat more remotely; for without this, the Law with relation to that particular Inſtance, cannot be ſaid to be properly known. For altho' I know ſuch a ſpecies of Action (ſuppoſe Adultery) to be a Tranſgreſſion of the Law, yet if I know not that by ſuch a particular Inſtance I *commit* it, I cannot be ſaid to know, that *this my action* is a Tranſgreſſion of the Law; and conſequently, (ſuppoſing this my Ignorance *invincible*) am wholly excuſable; as appears in the Caſe of *Abimelech*, when he took *Abraham*'s Wife, *Gen.* 20.

9. So that to the Conſtitution of Formal Sin theſe two Things are required; 1*ſt*. That the Tranſgreſſor have a Power either *immediately*, or at leaſt in the Principle, of not doing that Action which is a Tranſgreſſion: 2*ly*. That he either do or may, know that Act to be a Tranſgreſſion of the Law; and likewiſe, that he know when he Commits it. And thus have I ſhewn the riſe, progreſs, and maturity of Sin; I have preſented to view both the *imperfect Embrio*, and the *full proportion'd* and animated *Monſter*. All which I ſhall briefly compriſe in that compendious Deſcription of St. *James*, *Luſt when it is conceiv'd bringeth forth Sin; and Sin when it is finiſhed, bringeth forth Death*, James 1. 15.

10. There is one thing behind, relating to the Nature of Sin in Common; which I ſhall briefly conſider; and that is, Whether its Nature be *Poſitive*

tive or *Privative*. The later is generally held, both by Metaphyſitians, Moraliſts and Divines; but upon what ſufficient grounds, I could never yet underſtand. The Formal Part of Sin, without all queſtion, is *Poſitive*; as is plain from the very Notion of it. For it denotes only that ſpecial Dependence, which an irregular Act has upon the Will; which is the ſame (as well as the common Subſtance of the Act) both in *good* and *bad* Actions; and conſequently, *alike Poſitive*.

11. All the Controverſie therefore, remains concerning the *Material* Part of Sin, Whether that be *Poſitive* or *Privative*. And this too, not with reſpect to the *mere Act*, (for that without queſtion is *Poſitive*) but with reſpect to the Irregularity of it.

12. Here then I conſider, that according to the foregoing Meaſures, the irregularity of an Action is not only its aberration from the Rule, but its *croſſing*, or going *contrary* to it. For 'tis not only its *not promoting*, but its *oppoſing*, or at leaſt, its natural aptneſs to oppoſe the greateſt and beſt of Ends. So that 'tis not ſo properly an *Irregularity*, as a *Contraregularity*. And therefore, good and bad Actions are not *privatively*, but *contrarily* oppoſed; and conſequently, both poſitive; for Contraries are always ſo.

13. For *as to be in Pain*, is not *Privatively*, but *Contrarily* oppoſed to being Happy, (for Pain is ſomething more than *want of Happineſs*) ſo that Action which cauſes Pain or Miſery, is not *privatively*, but *contrarily* oppoſed to that which is Effective of Happineſs; and conſequently, is as Poſitive as the other.

14. Thoſe

14. Thoſe Sins which bid the faireſt for Privation, are Sins of Omiſſion. But even theſe, if we conſider their Nature, will appear to be alſo Poſitive. For to ſpeak properly, their Irregularity does not lye in the *not doing*, or the *not willing* to do what ought to be done, but in the *willing not* to do it: But to *will* the *not doing* of a thing, is as *poſitive* as the *willing to do* it, as being not *contradictorily* or *privatively*, but *contrarily* oppoſed to it. The Sins therefore of Omiſſion, are as Poſitive as thoſe of Commiſſion. The only difference is, that the Poſitiveneſs of Sins of Commiſſion, lies both in the *Habitude* of the *Will*, and in the *executed Act* too; whereas the Poſitiveneſs of Sins of Omiſſion, is in the *Habitude* of the *Will only*.

15. And what is here determin'd concerning *Moral Evil*, will, I ſuppoſe, hold equally true in all Evil, except only that which is *Abſolute*; that is, whoſe Evil is not its *noxiouſneſs* to any thing elſe, but only the want of ſome conſtituent Perfection due to *its ſelf*, according to that diſtinction mentioned by *Suarez* in his Diſputation *de Malo*, of *malum in ſe*, and *malum alteri*. This indeed does import no more than a Privation. And this I ſuppoſe, might be the occaſion of miſtake to thoſe who firſt thought *Moral Evil* to conſiſt in a Privation only; for *Abſolute Evil* does ſo, and they (as I intimated above) took *Moral Evil* to be a kind of *abſolute Nature*.

16. Many things I know might be, and are commonly objected againſt the Poſitiveneſs of Sin; but I can think but of one that's worth conſidering; which is, That if Sin be *poſitive*, it will be a *real Entity*; and if ſo, then we are preſs'd with a double

ble Abſurdity: Firſt, That God will be the Author of it, as being the Efficient Cauſe of all *Entity:* Secondly, That it will be *Good*, goodneſs being a neceſſary Affection of *Ens*.

17. To this I Anſwer: Firſt, That I not only freely *acknowledg*, but *contend* that Sin is a *real Entity*. But then I diſtinguiſh of Entity. There are *Phyſical*, and there are *Moral* Entities. By the later, (which alone needs Explication) I underſtand certain Modes of Determination, ſuperadded to Phyſical Things, or Motions by intelligent Beings, in order therefore to the intereſt, or diſintereſt of the Univerſe.

18. This being premiſed, I anſwer to the firſt part of the Objection, by *denying* that it hence follows, that God is the Author of Sin. God indeed is the Author of all *Phyſical Beings* and *Motions*, but not of thoſe *modes of determination* ſuper-added by *intelligent Beings*; which I call *Moral Entities*. As to the Second, I grant the Conſequence, but deny the Abſurdity of it. For it is no Abſurdity that *Moral Evil* ſhould be *Metaphyſically Good*. For this metaphyſical, tranſcendental Goodneſs, which is the Affection of *Ens*, is nothing elſe but a Being's having that Eſſence whereof it is capable, or (as *Suarez* expreſſes it) its having that Perfection which is *convenient* to it. But this is very conſiſtent with the Nature of *Moral Evil*; for this may have what belongs to its *Idea*, as well as *good*; and 'tis the Perfection of Sin, to be *exceeding ſinful*.

Sect.

Sect. IV.

Corollaries deduced from the whole. The foulneſs and deformity of Sin repreſented. That it is the greateſt of Evils. That no Formal Sin can be in its ſelf Venial. That in all probability Vindicative Juſtice is Eſſential to God, hence deduced. A new Hypotheſis for the reconciling of Eternal Puniſhments with the Divine Juſtice. That he who throughly underſtands, and actually attends to the Nature of Sin, cannot poſſibly Commit it.

1. HAving thus far carried on the Theory of Sin, we may now ſit down, and take an Eſtimate of its *Foulneſs* and *Deformity*. And methinks I am affrighted at the uglineſs of the Face which I have unmask'd; and am ready to ſtart back from the diſtorted and ill-boding Monſter. For however the Magic of Self-love may reconcile Men to their own Faults, yet if we ſet the Object at a more convenient diſtance from the Eye, and conſider the Nature of Sin irreſpectively to our ſelves, 'twill certainly appear according to the precedent Meaſures, to be the moſt deform'd, monſtrous Thing, that can either be found, or conceiv'd in Nature.

2. For if we conſider it in its full Latitude, it is the higheſt χοϊσις, or Habitude of the Will to the worſt of Objects; than which, what can be imagin'd more Monſtrous and Abſurd? If we conſider it as a violation of the Poſitive Law, what can be more indecorous, than for a Creature to violate the Commands, and trample upon the Authority of that

that awful Excellence to whom he owes his Life, his Motion, and his very Being? If we conſider it as a Violation of the Law of Reaſon, what can be more Monſtrous and Unnatural, than for a Man to Rebel againſt the *vicarious Power of God* in his Soul? to refuſe to live according to that Part of him, whereby he is a Man? to ſuffer the ſerine and brutiſh Part to get the Aſcendent over that which is Rational and Divine; to refuſe to be govern'd by thoſe ſacred Digeſts, which are the Tranſcripts of the *Moral Nature of God*; and to act againſt the very Frame and Contexture of his *Being*. Laſtly, If we conſider it as a Tranſgreſſion againſt that *great and Soveraign Law* of promoting the *Common Happineſs*, what a monſtrous Evil muſt that be which croſſes and oppoſes the beſt of Ends, and which is alſo propoſed by the beſt of Beings; that for the Intereſt of an inconſiderable Part (commonly ones ſelf) juſtles the great Wheel of Society out of its proper Track; that by purſuing a leſſer, in prejudice to a greater Good, diſturbs the Order of Things, diſlocates the Frame, and untunes the Harmony of the Univerſe!

3. We may alſo hence conclude, That Sin is the *greateſt Evil* that is, or that can poſſibly be. For it is contrarily oppoſed to the *greateſt poſſible Good*; and conſequently, muſt needs be the *greateſt Evil*. And beſides, 'tis that which in no Caſe or Juncture whatſoever, is to be Committed; and therefore muſt be the *greateſt Evil*; becauſe otherwiſe, it might happen to come into *Competition* with a *greater*, and ſo commence *Eligible*; which is contrary to the ſuppoſition. Moreover, the greatneſs of this

Evil above all others, is *à poſteriori*, further confirm'd from the greatneſs of the *Sacrifice* required for its *Attonement*. God *could not*, or at leaſt, *thought not fit* to remit it, without the ſhedding of Blood; and that too, of the *Blood of God*. So great a Fool is he, ſo little does he conſider, that *makes a Mock at ſin*.

4. Again, It may be hence Collected, That no Formal Sin can be in its *own Nature Venial*. For according to the former Meaſures, every Formal Sin, tho' never ſo ſmall, is a Sin againſt the *greateſt Charity imaginable*. For 'tis againſt *that Charity*, whereby I ought to promote the Ends of God, and proſecute the great Intereſt of the Univerſe. And conſequently, cannot be in its own Nature Venial, or Pardonable without *Repentance*.

5. Nay, May I not further conclude according to the preceding Meaſures, that 'tis very *probable*, that no Sin could have been pardon'd even with Repentance, had there not been alſo Satisfaction made for it; and that *vindicative Juſtice* is Eſſential to the Nature of God? For when I conſider Sin, I find it ſo diametrically contrary to the Eſſential Sanctity of God, and ſo deſtructive of that great End which he cannot but propoſe, that he muſt needs Hate it with an *infinite* Hatred. But how he ſhould do ſo, and yet not *Puniſh* for it, is hard to underſtand.

6. Upon theſe Meaſures we may alſo find out a way of reconciling *Eternal Puniſhments* with *Divine Juſtice*. The great Objection is, What Proportion is there between a *tranſient* Act of Sin, and Eternal Miſery? And if there be none, how is it conſiſtent with

with Divine Juſtice to inflict the one for the other? This has been a great difficulty. and has for a long time ſtood proof againſt all Solutions. But now, if we conſider Sin as *contrarily* oppoſed to the *greateſt poſſible good*, the good of the *Univerſe*; and conſequently, as the *greateſt poſſible Evil*, its demerit will be ſuch, that we need not fear 'twill be *over-puniſh'd*, even with *Eternal Miſery*. For if any Miſery is to be endured, rather than one Sin to be committed, 'tis alſo juſt that any may be, when it is committed. For the Equity of both, depends upon Sin's being the *greateſt Evil*.

7. The laſt Deduction which I ſhall make from the Premiſes is this, That he who *throughly underſtands*, and *actually attends* to the Nature of Sin, cannot poſſibly Commit it. For as long as he does ſo, he muſt look upon it as the *greateſt Evil*, otherwiſe he cannot be ſaid rightly to underſtand it. And if he look upon it as the greateſt Evil, he cannot chuſe it, ſo long as he continues in that Judgment; becauſe the then chuſing it, would be the chuſing of *all that* whereby it exceeds other Evils, *gratis*; which is the chuſing of Evil *as Evil*; which is *impoſſible*.

8. Whoſoever therefore conſents to the Commiſſion of Sin, paſſes firſt a *wrong Judgment* upon it, has the *Light of his Underſtanding darkened*, and intercepted by a Cloud of Paſſion, loſes the *preſent Conviction* of Sin's being the *greateſt Evil*, and ſo Commits it to avoid (as he then fooliſhly thinks) a *greater*. So that the Cauſe and Origine of all Sin, is *Ignorance, Folly*, and *Inadvertence*: There is a falſe Propoſition in the *Underſtanding*, before there is any miſapplication in the *Will*; and 'tis through the *ſwimming*

ming of the Head that the *Feet ſlip*, and loſe their Station. And yet the Sinner is no way excuſable for this his Deception, becauſe 'tis the Ignorance of that which he *habitually knows*, and he might have *attended better*; and 'twas his Fault that he *did not*.

9. And 'tis the recovering and awaking up into this *Conviction*, that is the Principle of Repentance and Reformation of Life. When a Man by the aid of Grace, and the uſe of due Attention, reſumes his interrupted Judgment of Sin's being the *greateſt Evil*, he then comes again to himſelf, forms new Reſolutions never to Commit it, and returns to the *Wiſdom of the Juſt*, Pſal. 119. So great reaſon had the Pſalmiſt to pray, *O grant me Underſtanding, and I ſhall live.*

The Prayer.

O My God, who art pure Light, and in whom there is no Darkneſs at all; *who art pure Love, and hateſt nothing but Sin, and hateſt that infinitely, give me an Heart after thine own Heart, that I may alſo abhor it without Meaſure, and without End. Open thou mine Eyes, that I may ſee thoſe* two wondrous Things of thy Law, *the* Beauty of Holineſs, *and the* Deformity of Sin. *Inſpire me with that Charity which* ſeeketh not her own, *that I may ever propoſe and follow that great and excellent End which thou propoſeſt, that I may ever adhere to that which is ſimply and abſolutely Beſt*; *and never for any* Self-advantage, *diſturb the Order of thy* Creation. *O let me never ſo far abuſe thoſe Faculties thou haſt given me,*

me, as to thwart the deſigns of thy Goodneſs and Wiſdom, and to interrupt that Harmony *wherein thou ſo delighteſt. But let all my deſigns be generous, unſelfiſh and ſincere, ſo as chiefly to rejoyce at the good of thy* Creation, *at whoſe very material Beauty* the Morning Stars ſang together, and all the Sons of God ſhouted for Joy. *Holy Father, 'tis thy Will that this thy great Family ſhould be proſperous and happy, and the better part of it thy Angels, ſtrictly Conform to it;* O *let* this thy Will be done here on Earth as it is in Heaven; *and grant that every Member of this great Body, may ſo ſtudy the good of the Whole, that thou may'ſt once more review the Works of thy Hands; and with a Fatherly complacency, pronounce them good. Grant this for the ſake of him who gave his Life for the Happineſs of the World, thy Son Jeſus,* Amen.

II.

Give me Wiſdom that ſitteth by thy Throne; and reject me not from among thy Children. That Wiſdom which was with thee from the Beginning; which knoweth all thy Works; and was preſent when thou madeſt the World; and knew what was Acceptable in thy Sight; and Right in thy Commandments. O ſend her out of thy holy Heavens, and from the Throne of thy Glory; that being preſent, ſhe may labour with me; that I may know, and throughly conſider what an Evil it is to Affront thy Authority, to break through the Bounds which thou haſt ſet, to Rebel againſt the moſt excellent and divine Part of my Nature, and to oppoſe that which

thou lov'ſt, and which is of all things the moſt lovely. O let thy Wiſdom dwell with me, let my Loins be always Girt, and this my Light always Burning, that I may never be deceiv'd through the deceitfulneſs of Sin, nor ſeek Death in the Errour of my Life. Thy words have I hid within my Heart, that I might not Sin againſt thee; O grant me Underſtanding, and I ſhall live. Keep I beſeech thee, this Conviction ſtill freſh and fully awake in me, That Sin is the greateſt of all Evils, that ſo the fear of none may ever drive me to do the Thing which thy Soul hates. Conſider and hear me, O Lord my God, lighten mine Eyes that I ſleep not in Death. Amen, Amen.

An IDEA of Happineſs: Enquiring Wherein the greateſt Happineſs Attainable by Man in this Life does conſiſt.

In a Letter to a Friend.

SIR,

1. THO' you have been pleas'd to Aſſign me the Task of an Angel, and in that reſpect, have warranted me to diſobey you; yet, ſince a conſiderable Part of that experimental Knowledge which I have of *Happineſs* is owing to Delight, which I take in your virtuous and endearing Friendſhip, I think 'tis but reaſonable I ſhould endeavour to give you an Idea of that, whereof you have given me the *Poſſeſſion*.

2. You deſire to know of me, Wherein the greateſt Happineſs Attainable by Man in this Life, does conſiſt: And here, tho' I ſee my ſelf engaged in a Work already too difficult for me, yet I find it neceſſary to enlarge it: For, ſince the greateſt *Happineſs*, or *Summum Bonum* of this Life, is a Species of Happineſs in general; and ſince it is called (Greateſt) not becauſe abſolutely Perfect and Compleat; but inaſmuch as it comes neareſt to that which indeed is ſo, it will be neceſſary firſt to State the Notion of Happineſs in general; and then to define, wherein that Happineſs does conſiſt which is Perfect and

Compleat, before I can proceed to a Reſolution of your Queſtion.

3. By *Happineſs*, in the moſt general Senſe of the word, I underſtand nothing elſe but an Enjoyment of any Good. The leaſt Degree of Good has the ſame Proportion to the leaſt Degree of *Happineſs*, as the greateſt has to the greateſt; and conſequently, as many ways as a Man enjoys any Good, ſo many ways he may be ſaid to be *Happy*: Neither will the Mixture of Evil make him forfeit his Right to this Title, unleſs it either *equals* the Good he enjoys, or *exceeds* it; and then indeed it does: But the reaſon is, becauſe in ſtrictneſs of Speaking, upon the whole Account, the Man enjoys no Good at all: For if the Good and the Evil be equal-ballanc'd, it muſt needs be indifferent to that Man either to be, or not to be, there being not the leaſt Grain of Good to determine his Choice: So that he can no more be ſaid to be Happy in that Condition, than he could before he was Born. And much leſs, if the Evil exceeds the Good: For then he is not only not *Happy*, but abſolutely and purely Miſerable; For after an exact Commenſuration ſuppoſed between the Good and the Evil, all that remains over of the Evil, is pure and ſimple Miſery; which is the Caſe of the Damn'd: And when 'tis once come to this (whatever ſome Mens Metaphyſicks may perſwade them) I am very well ſatisfied, that 'tis better not to be, than to be. But now on the other ſide, if the Good does never ſo little out-weigh the Evil, that Overplus of Good is as pure and unallay'd in its Proportion, as if there were no ſuch Mixture at all; and conſequently,

quently, the Poſſeſſion of it may properly be call'd Happineſs.

4. I know the Maſters of Moral Philoſophy do not treat of Happineſs in this Latitude, neither is it fit they ſhould: For their Buſineſs being to point out the ultimate End of Human Actions, it would be an impertinent Thing for them, to give any other Idea of Happineſs than the higheſt: But however, this does not hinder but that the general Idea of Happineſs may be extended farther, even to the Fruition of any Good whatſoever: Neither is there any reaſon to find fault with the Latitude of this Notion, ſince we acknowledge Degrees even in Glory.

5. In this general Idea of Happineſs, two Things are contain'd. One is, ſome Good, either real or apparent; in the Fruition of which, we are ſaid to be in ſome meaſure or other Happy. The other is the very Fruition it ſelf. The firſt of theſe, is uſually called *Objective Happineſs*; and the later, *Formal*. Some I know, divide Happineſs into theſe as diſtinct Species; but I think not ſo artificially: For they are both but conſtituent Parts, which joyntly make up one and the ſame Happineſs: Neither of them are ſufficient alone, but they are both equally neceſſary. That the laſt of theſe is a neceſſary Ingredient, I think no doubt can reaſonably be made: For what would the greateſt Good imaginable ſignifie without Fruition? And that the former is likewiſe neceſſary, is no leſs certain: For how can there be ſuch a Thing as Fruition, without an Object? I grant, 'tis not at all neceſſary that the Object be a real ſubſtantial Good; if it appear ſo, 'tis ſufficient.

6. From

6. From this Distinction of *real* and *apparent* Good, some have taken occasion to distinguish of *Happiness* likewise in two sorts, *real* and *imaginary*: But I believe, upon a more narrow Scrutiny into the matter, 'twill be found, that all *Happiness*, according to its Proportion, is equally *real*, and that that which they term *Imaginary*, too well deserves the Name; there being no such thing in Nature: For let the Object of it be never so *Phantastic*, yet it must still carry the Semblance and Appearance of Good (otherwise it can neither *move* the Appetite nor *please* it, and consequently be neither an Object of *Desire* nor of *Fruition*;) and if so, the *Happiness* must needs be real; because the Formality of the Object, tho' 'twere never so true and real a good, would notwithstanding lie in the *Appearance*, not in the *Reality*: Whether it be real or no, is purely accidental: For, since to be happy, can be nothing else but to enjoy something which I desire, the Object of my *Happiness* must needs be *enjoy'd* under the same Formality as 'tis *desired*. Now since 'tis desired only as apparently good, it must needs please me when obtained under the same Notion. So that it matters not the Reality of my *Happiness*, whether the Object of it be really Good, or only apprehended so; since if it were never so *real*, it *pleases* only as *apparent*. The Fool has his Paradise as well as the Wise-man, and for the time is as *happy* in it; and a kind Delusion, will make a Cloud as pleasing as the Queen of *Heaven*. And therefore I think it impossible, for Man to think himself *Happy*, and (during that Perswasion) not really to be so. He enjoys the *Creature* of his own Fancy, worships the *Idol* of

of his Imagination; and the *happieſt* Man upon Earth does no more: For let the Circumſtances of his Life be what they will, 'tis his Opinion only that muſt give the Reliſh. Without this, Heaven it ſelf would afford him no Content; nor the Viſion of God prove *Beatific*. 'Tis true, the Man is ſeated at the *Spring-Head* of *Happineſs*, is ſurrounded with excellent Objects; but alas, it appears not ſo to him; he is not at all affected with his Condition, but, like *Adam*, lies faſt in a dead Sleep in the midſt of Paradiſe.

7. The Sum of this Argument is this; Good is in the ſame manner the Object of *Fruition*, as 'tis of Deſire; and that is not as *really* good in its own Nature, but as 'tis *judged* ſo by the Underſtanding: And conſequently, tho' it be only apparent, it muſt needs be as effectual to *gratifie* the Appetite, as it was at firſt to *excite* it during that Appearance. So long as it keeps on its Vizor, and impoſes upon the Underſtanding, what is wanting in the Thing, is made up by an *obliging* Impoſture; and *Ignorance* becomes here the Mother of *Happineſs*, as well as of *Devotion*: But if the Man will *dare* to be Wiſe, and too curiouſly examine the ſuperficial Tinſel-Good, he undeceives himſelf to his own Coſt; and, like *Adam*, adventuring to Eat of the Tree of *Knowledge*, ſees himſelf naked, and is aſhamed. And for this Reaſon, I think it impoſſible for any Man to Love to be flatter'd: 'Tis true, he may delight to hear himſelf commended by thoſe who indeed do flatter him; but the true Reaſon of that is, becauſe he does not apprehend that to be Flattery, which indeed is ſo; but when he once thoroughly knows

it,

it, 'tis impoſſible he ſhould be any longer delighted with it. I ſhall conclude this Point with this uſeful Reflection, That ſince every Man's Happineſs depends wholly upon his own Opinion, the Foundation upon which all envious Men proceed, muſt needs be either *falſe* or very *uncertain*. Falſe, if they think that outward Circumſtances and States of Life, are all the Ingredients of Happineſs; but uncertain however: For ſince they meaſure the Happineſs of other Men by their own Opinion, 'tis mere Chance if they do not miſplace their Envy; unleſs they were ſure the other Perſon was of the like Opinion with themſelves. And now what a vain irrational thing is it, to diſquiet our ſelves into a diſlike of our own Condition, merely becauſe we miſtake another Man's;

8. Thus far of the Notion of Happineſs in general; I now proceed to conſider that Happineſs which is ὑγιὴς καὶ ὁλόκληρος (as *Plato* ſpeaks) Sound and Entire, Perfect and Compleat. Concerning the general Notion of which, all Men I ſuppoſe, are as much agreed, as they are in the *Idea* of the *Triangle*: That 'tis ſuch a State than which a better cannot be conceiv'd: In which there is no Evil you can fear, no Good which you deſire and have not: That which fully and conſtantly ſatisfies the Demand of every Appetite, and leaves no poſſibility for a deſire of Change; or to ſumm it up in that comprehenſive Expreſſion of the Poet,

Quod ſis eſſe velis, nihilque malis.

When you would always be what you are, and (as the

the Earl of *Roſcommon* very ſignificantly renders it) do *Rather* nothing.

9. This I ſuppoſe is the utmoſt that can be ſaid, or conceiv'd of it; and leſs than this will not be enough. And thus far we are all agreed. For I ſuppoſe, the many various Diſputes maintained by Philoſophers concerning Happineſs, could not reſpect this general Notion of it; but only the particular *Cauſes* or *Means* whereby it might be acquired. And I find *Tully* concurring with me in the ſame Obſervation, *Ea eſt beata vita* (ſays he) *quærimus autem non quæ ſit ſed unde.* The difficulty is not to frame a Conception of a perfectly happy State in the general, but to define in particular wherein it conſiſts.

lib. 3. de Fin.

10. But before I undertake this Province, I think it might not be amiſs to remove one Prejudice; which, becauſe it has gain'd upon my ſelf ſometimes in my Melancholy Retirements, I am apt to think it may be incident to other Men alſo. It is this, Whether after ſo many Diſputes about, ſo many reſtleſs Endeavours after this ſtate of Perfect Happineſs, there be any ſuch Thing or no. Whether it be not a mere *Idea*, as imaginary as *Plato*'s *Common-wealth*, as fictious as the Groves of *Elyſium*. I confeſs, this ſuſpition has oftentimes *overcaſt* my Mind with black Thoughts, damp'd my Devotion; and as it were, clipp'd the Wings of my Aſpiring Soul. And I happened to fall into it upon a ſerious reflection on the Nature of Fruition in the ſeveral Periods and Circumſtances of my Life. For I obſerv'd, according to my *Narrow* Experience, That I never had in all my Life, the ſame Thoughts of any

any Good in the very time of the enjoying it, as I had before. I have known, when I have promiſed my ſelf vaſt Satisfactions, and my Imagination has preſented me at a diſtance, with a fair *Landskip* of Delight, yet when I drew nigh to graſp the alluring Happineſs, like the *Senſitive Plant*, it contracted it ſelf at the *touch*, and *ſhrink'd* almoſt to *Nothing* in the Fruition. And tho' after the Enjoyment is paſt, it ſeems great again upon *Reflection*, as it did before in *Expectation*, yet ſhould a *Platonical Revolution* make the ſame Circumſtances recur, I ſhould not think ſo. I found 'twas ever with me, as with the *Traveller*, to whom the Ground which is before him, and that which he has left *behind* him, ſeems always moſt curiouſly embroider'd and delightſome, than that which he *ſtands* upon. So that my Happineſs, like the time wherein I *thought* to enjoy it, was always either *paſt* or to *come*, never *preſent*. Methought I could often ſay upon a *Recollection*, How happy *was* I at ſuch a time! Or when I was in *Expectation*, How happy ſhall I be if I compaſs ſuch a Deſign! But ſcarce ever, I *am* ſo. I was pretty well pleas'd methought, while I expected, while I hoped, till Fruition jogg'd me out of my pleaſing Slumber, and I knew it was but a Dream. And this ſingle Conſideration has often made me, even in the very purſuit after Happineſs, and full career of my Paſſions, to ſtop ſhort on this ſide of Fruition, and to chuſe rather with *Moſes* upon *Mount-Nebo*, to entertain my Fancy with a remote Proſpect of the *Happy Land*, than to go in and poſſeſs it, and then *Repine*. How then ſhall Man be Happy, when ſetting aſide all the Croſſes of

of Fortune, he will complain even of *Succeſs*; and Fruition it ſelf ſhall *diſappoint* him!

11. And this melancholy Reflection bred in me a kind of ſuſpicion, That for all that I knew it might be ſo in *Heaven* too. That although at this diſtance I might frame to my ſelf bright *Ideas* of that Region of Bliſs; yet when I came to the Poſſeſſion of it, I ſhould not find that perfect Happineſs there which I expected; but that it would be always to *come*, as 'tis now; and that I ſhould ſeek for Heaven, even in Heaven it ſelf. That I ſhould not fully Acquieſce in my Condition there; but at length, deſire a Change. And that which confirm'd me the more in this *unhappy Scepticiſm*, was, becauſe I conſider'd that a great number of Excellent Beings, who enjoyed the very *Quinteſſence* of Bliſs, who were as Happy as God and Heaven could make them, grew ſoon uneaſie and weary of their State, and *left their own Habitation*. Which argues, that their Happineſs was not *Perfect* and *Compleat*, becauſe otherwiſe they would not have *deſired* a Change; ſince that very Deſire is an Imperfection. And if Happineſs be not Compleat in Heaven, ſure 'tis impoſſible to be found any where elſe.

12. Before therefore I proceed to define wherein perfect Happineſs does conſiſt, I think it neceſſary to endeavour the removal of this Scruple, which, like the flaming Sword, forbids *Entrance into Paradiſe*. In order to which, I ſhall enquire into the *true Reaſon* why theſe Sublunary good Things, when enjoyed, do *neither* anſwer our *Expectations*, nor ſatisfie our *Appetites*. Now this muſt *proceed either* from the Nature of Fruition it ſelf; or from the Im-

Imperfection of it; or from the Object of it; or from our ſelves. I confeſs, did this Defect proceed from the *very Nature* of Fruition, (as is ſuppoſed in the Objection,) 'tis impoſſible there ſhould be any ſuch thing as *perfect Happineſs*, ſince 'twould *Faint away* while enjoy'd, and *Expire* in our *Embraces*. But that it cannot proceed thence, I have this to offer, Becauſe Fruition being nothing elſe but an Application, or Union of the Soul to ſome good or agreeable Object, it is impoſſible that ſhould *leſſen* the *Good* enjoyed. *Indeed* it may *leſſen* our Eſtimation of it; but that is, becauſe we do not rightly conſider the Nature of Things, but promiſe our *ſelves* infinite Satisfactions in the *Enjoyment* of finite Objects. We look upon Things through a falſe Glaſs; which Magnifies the Objects at a diſtance, much beyond its juſt Dimenſions. We repreſent our *future Enjoyments* to our ſelves in ſuch *favourable* and *partial Ideas*, which abſtract from all the *Inconveniencies* and Allays, which will really in the *Event* accompany them, And if we thus over-rate our *Felicities* before hand, 'tis no wonder if they baulk our *Expectations* in the *Fruition*. But then it muſt be obſerved, That the *Fruition* does not cauſe this *Deficiency* in the Object, but only *diſcover* it. We have a better inſight into the Nature of Things near at hand, than when we ſtood afar off; and conſequently, diſcern thoſe *Defects* and *Imperfections*, which, like the Qualities of an ill Miſtreſs, lay hid all the Time of *Courtſhip*, and now begin to betray themſelves, when 'tis come to *Enjoyment*. But this can never happen, but where the Object is finite. An infinite Object can never

never be over-valued; and conſequently, cannot fruſtrate our *Expectations*.

13. And as we are not to charge Fruition with our *Diſappointments*, but our ſelves, (becauſe we are Acceſſory to our own *deluſion*, by taking falſe Meaſures of Things) ſo neither is the *Unſatisfactorineſs* of any Condition to be imputed to the Nature of Fruition it ſelf; but either to the *Imperfection* of it, or to the Finiteneſs of the Object. Let the Object be never ſo Perfect, yet if the Fruition of it be in an imperfect Meaſure, there will ſtill be room for *Unſatisfactorineſs*; as it appears in our *Enjoyment* of God in this Life. Neither can a finite Object fully ſatisfie us, tho' we enjoy it never ſo throughly. For ſince to a full Satisfaction and *Acquieſcence* of Mind, 'tis required, that our Faculties be always entertained, and we ever enjoying: it is impoſſible a finite Object ſhould afford this Satisfaction, becauſe all the Good that is in it (being finite) is at length run over; and then the *enjoyment* is at an End. The Flower is ſuck'd dry, and we neceſſarily deſire a Change. Whenever therefore our *Enjoyment* proves unſatisfying, we may conclude, that either the Object is finite, or the Fruition imperfect. But then how came the *Angels* to be diſſatisfy'd with their Condition in the Regions of *Light* and *Immortality*, when they drank freely of the *Fountain of Life*, Rev. 26. proceeding out of the Throne of God, with whom is fulneſs of Joy, and at whoſe Right Hand are *Pleaſures for evermore?* Here certainly, there is no room either for the *finiteneſs* of the Object, or the *imperfection* of Fruition. And therefore, their diſſatisfaction can be imputed

to no other Cauſe, than the Nature of Fruition in general, which is to *leſſen* the Good *enjoyed*, as was ſuppoſed in the *Objection*. This I confeſs preſſes hard; and indeed I have but one way to *extricate* my ſelf from this difficulty; and that is, by ſuppoſing a *State* of *Probation* in the *Angels*. That they did not immediately upon their *Creation* enjoy an *infinite Object*, or if they did, yet that 'twas in an *imperfect Meaſure*. For ſhould it be granted, that they were at firſt confirmed in Bliſs, and *compleatly Happy*, both in reſpect of *Fruition* and *Object*, as we ſuppoſe they are now, I cannot *conceive* it poſſible they ſhould be diſſatisfy'd with their Condition. This being repugnant to the *Idea* of *Perfect Happineſs*.

14. Since then this Diſſatisfaction muſt be derived either from the imperfection of the *Fruition*, or the finiteneſs of the Object, and not from the Nature of *Fruition* in the general, to infer the poſſibility of *Perfect Happineſs*, there needs no more to be ſuppoſed, than the *Exiſtence* of a Being full fraught with infinite inexhauſtible Good, and that he is able to Communicate to the full. There may be then ſuch a thing as Perfect *Happineſs*. The poſſibility of which may alſo be further *proved* (tho' not *explicated*) from thoſe boundleſs Deſires, that *immortal Thirſt* every Man has after it by Nature: Concerning which, I obſerve, That nothing does more conſtantly, more inſeparably cleave to our Minds, than this Deſire of perfect and conſummated Happineſs: This, as *Plato* pathetically expreſſes it, is, πέρας ἅ πόνων τὸ κάλλιστον, ὁ μέγας ἀγὼν, καὶ ἐλπὶς ἡ μεγάλη, the moſt excellent End of all our Endeavours,

deavours, the great Prize, the great Hope. This is the Mark every Man ſhoots at; and tho' we miſs our Aim never ſo often, yet we will not, cannot give over; but, like paſſionate Lovers, take *Reſolution* from a *Repulſe*. The Reſt of our Paſſions are much at our own Diſpoſal; yield either to Reaſon or Time; we either Argue our ſelves out of them, or at leaſt out-live them. We are not always in Love with Pomp and Grandeur, nor always dazzled with the glittering of Riches; and there is a Seaſon when Pleaſure it ſelf ſhall Court in vain: But the deſire of perfect Happineſs has no Intervals, no Viciſſitudes; it out-laſts the Motion the Pulſe, and ſurvives the Ruins of the Grave. *Many Waters cannot quench it, neither can the Floods drown it:* And now certainly, God would never have planted ſuch an Ardent, ſuch an Importunate Appetite in our Souls; and as it were, *interwoven* it with our very Natures, had he not been able to ſatisfie it.

15. I come now to ſhew, wherein this Perfect Happineſs does conſiſt; concerning which, I affirm in the Firſt place, That it is not to be found in any Thing we can enjoy in this Life. The greateſt Fruition we have of God here, is imperfect; and conſequently unſatisfactory. And as for all other Objects, they are finite; and conſequently, though never ſo fully enjoy'd, cannot afford us perfect Satisfaction. No, *Man knoweth not the price thereof: Neither is it to be found in the Land of the Living. The Depth ſaith, it is not in me; and the Sea ſaith, it is not in me*, Job 28. The Vanity of the Creature has been ſo copiouſly diſcourſed upon,

both by Philoſophers and Divines, and withal is ſo obvious to every thinking Man's *Experience*, that I need not here take an *Inventory* of the *Creation*, nor turn *Eccleſiaſtes* after *Solomon*. And beſides, I have already anticipated this Argument in what I have ſaid concerning *Fruition*, I ſhall only add one or two Remarks concerning the Objects of *Secular Happineſs*, which are not ſo commonly inſiſted upon, to what has been there ſaid. The firſt is this, That the Objects wherein Men generally ſeek for *Happineſs* here, are not only *finite* in their *Nature*, but alſo *few* in *number*. Indeed, Could a Man's Life be ſo contrived, that he ſhould have a new *Pleaſure* ſtill ready at hand aſſoon as *he* was grown *weary* of the Old, and every day *enjoy a Virgin* Delight, he might then perhaps, like Mr. *Hobbs* his Notion, and for a while think himſelf happy in this *continued Succeſſion of new Acquiſitions*. But alas, Nature does not treat us with this Variety. The Compaſs of our *Enjoyments* is much ſhorter than that of our Lives; and there is a *Periodical Circulation* of our *Pleaſures*, as well as of our *Blood*.

——— *Verſamur ibidem atque inſumus uſque.*
Nec nova vivendo procuditur ulla voluptas.
Lucretius.

The Enjoyments of our Lives run in a perpetual Round, like the Months in the *Calendar*, but with a quicker Revolution, we *dance* like *Fairies* in a *Circle*, and our whole Life is but a nauſeous *Tautology*: We riſe like the Sun, and run the ſame Courſe we did the Day before; and to Morrow is

is but the ſame over again: So that the greateſt Favourite of Fortune, will have Reaſon often enough to cry out with him in *Seneca*, *Quouſque eadem?* But there is another Grievance which contributes to defeat our Endeavours after Perfect Happineſs in the Enjoyment of this Life; which is, That the Objects wherein we ſeek it, are not only *finite* and *few*; but that they commonly prove occaſions of greater *Sorrow* to us, than ever they afforded us *Content*. This may be made out ſeveral ways, as from the Labour of Getting, the Care of Keeping, the Fear of Loſing, and the like Topick, commonly inſiſted on by others; but I wave theſe, and fix upon another Account leſs Blown upon, and I think more Material than any of the reſt. It is this, That altho' the Object loſes that great Appearance in the *Fruition* which it had in the *Expectation*, yet after it is gone, it Reſumes it again. Now we, when we lament the loſs, do not take our Meaſures from that Appearance which the Object had in the *Enjoyment* (as we ſhould do to make our Sorrow not exceed our *Happineſs*) but from that which it has in the *Reflection*; and conſequently, we muſt needs be more *miſerable* in the loſs, than we were *Happy* in the *Enjoyment*.

16. From theſe, and the like *Conſiderations*, I think it will evidently appear, that this perfect *Happineſs* is not to be found in any thing we can enjoy in this Life. Wherein then does it conſiſt? I anſwer poſitively, in the full and entire Fruition of God. He (as *Plato* ſpeaks) is κύριον καὶ ἀρχιτελονικὸν τέλος, the proper and Principle End of Man, the Center of our Tendency, the Ark of our *Reſt*. He

is the Object which alone can ſatisfie the Appetite of the moſt capacious Soul, and ſtand the *Teſt* of Fruition to Eternity. And to enjoy him fully, is perfect Felicity. This in general, is no more than what is deliver'd to us in Scripture, and was believ'd by many of the *Heathen Philoſophers*. But the manner of this Fruition requires a more particular *Conſideration*. Much is ſaid by the School-men upon this Subject, whereof, in the firſt place, I ſhall give a ſhort and methodical Account; and then fix upon the Opinion which I beſt Approve of. The firſt Thing that I obſerve, is, that 'tis generally agreed upon among them, That this Fruition of God conſiſts in ſome *Operation*; and I think with very good Reaſon. For as by the *Objective* part of *perfect Happineſs*, we underſtand that which is beſt and laſt, and to which all other things are to be referr'd; ſo by the *Formal* Part of it, muſt be underſtood the beſt and laſt Habitude of Man toward that beſt Object; ſo that the Happineſs may both ways ſatisfie the Appetite; that is, as 'tis the beſt Thing, and as 'tis the Poſſeſſion, Uſe, or Fruition of that beſt thing: Now this Habitude, whereby the beſt Thing is perfectly poſſeſs'd, muſt needs be ſome *Operation*; becauſe *Operation* is the ultimate Perfection of every Being. Which *Axiom* (as *Cajetan* well obſerves) muſt not be ſo underſtood, as if Operation taken by it ſelf, were more Perfect than the Thing which tends to it; but that every Thing with its Operation, is more Perfect than without it.

17. The next thing which I obſerve, is, that 'tis alſo farther agreed upon among them, That this Operation wherein our Fruition of God does conſiſt, is

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an Operation of the *Intellectual* Part, and not of the *Senſitive*. And this alſo I take to be very reaſonable. Firſt, Becauſe 'tis generally receiv'd, That the Eſſence of God cannot be the Object of any of our Senſes. But Secondly, Suppoſe it could, yet ſince the Operation, wherein our *perfect Happineſs* does conſiſt, muſt be the perfecteſt Operation; and ſince that of the *Intellectual* Part is more Perfect than that of the *Senſitive*; it follows, that the Operation wereby we enjoy God, muſt be that of the *Intellectual* Part only.

18. But now whereas the *Intellectual* Part of Man (as 'tis oppoſed to the *Senſitive*) is double, *viz.* That of the *Underſtanding*, and that of the *Will*, there has commenced a great Controverſie between the *Thomiſts* and the *Scotiſts*, in which Act or Operation of the *Rational Soul*, the *Fruition* of God does conſiſt, Whether in an Act of the *Underſtanding*, or an Act of the *Will*. The *Thomiſts* will have it conſiſt purely in an Act of the *Underſtanding*, which is *Viſion*. The *Scotiſts* in the Act of the *Will*, which is *Love*. I intend not here to launch out into thoſe *Voluminous Intricacies* and *Abſtruſities*, occaſioned by the management of this Argument: It may ſuffice to tell you, that I think they are both in the extream; and therefore I ſhall take the middle way, and reſolve the perfect Fruition of God partly into *Viſion*, and partly into *Love*. Theſe are the two arms with which we embrace the Divinity, and unite our Souls to the *fair* One and the *Good*. Theſe I conceive are both ſo *Eſſential* to the *perfect Fruition* of God, that the *Idea* of it can by no means be maintained, if either of them be wanting. For ſince

God is both Supream *Truth* and infinite *Goodneſs*, he cannot be entirely poſſeſs'd, but by the moſt clear *Knowledge*, and the moſt ardent *Love*. And beſides, ſince the Soul is happy by her Faculties, her Happineſs muſt conſiſt in the moſt perfect Operation of each Faculty. For if Happineſs did conſiſt formally in the ſole Operation of the *Underſtanding*, (as moſt ſay) or in the ſole operation of the *Will*, (as others) the Man would not be compleatly, and in all reſpects Happy. For how is it poſſible a Man ſhould be perfectly Happy in loving the greateſt Good, if he did not know it; or in knowing it, if he did not Love it? And moreover, theſe two operations do ſo mutually tend to the promotion and conſervation of one another, that upon this depends the Perpetuity and the Conſtancy of our Happineſs. For while the Bleſſed do πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον, Face to Face Contemplate the Supream Truth and infinite Goodneſs, they cannot chuſe but Love perpetually; and while they perpetually Love, they cannot chuſe but perpetually Contemplate. And in this mutual Reciprocation of the Actions of the Soul, conſiſt the *Perpetuity* of Heaven, the *Circle* of Felicity.

19. Beſides this way of reſolving our *fruition* of God into *Viſion* and *Love*, there is a famous Opinion ſaid to be *broacht* by *Henricus Gandavenſis*, who upon a Suppoſition that God could not be ſo fully enjoy'd as is required to Perfect Happineſs, only by the *Operations* or *Powers* of the Soul, fancied a certain *Illapſe* whereby the *Divine Eſſence* did fall in with, and as it were penetrate the *Eſſence* of the Bleſſed. Which Opinion he en-

endeavours to illuſtrate by this Similitude: That as a piece of Iron, red hot by Reaſon of the *Illapſe* of the Fire into it, appears all over like Fire; ſo the Souls of the Bleſſed, by this *Illapſe* of the *Divine Eſſence* into them, ſhall be all over *Divine*.

20. I think he has ſcarce any *Followers* in this Opinion; but I am ſure he had a *Leader*. For this is no more than what *Plato* taught before him, as is to be ſeen in his Diſcourſes about the *Refuſion* of the Souls of good Men into the *Anima Mundi*; which is the ſelf-ſame, in other Terms, with this Opinion. And the Truth of what I affirm, may farther appear from an Expreſſion of that great *Platoniſt Plotinus*, (viz.) *That the Soul will then be happy, when it ſhall depart hence to God*, and as another, *and no longer her ſelf ſhall become wholly his*, ἑαυτὴν ὠυπῷ ὥσπερ κέντρῳ κέντρον συνέλασα, *having joyn'd her ſelf to him, as a Center to a Center*. Enn. 6. *lib.* 9. *cap.* 10.

21. That ſuch an intimate *Conjunction* with God as is here deſcribed, is poſſible, ſeems to me more than Credible from the Nature of the *Hypoſtatic* Union; but whether our *Fruition* of God after this Life ſhall conſiſt in it, none know but thoſe happy Souls who enjoy him; and therefore I ſhall determine nothing before the time. This only I obſerve, That ſhould our *Fruition* of God conſiſt in ſuch an Union, or rather *Penetration* of *Eſſences*, that would not exclude, but rather infer thoſe Operations of *Viſion* and *Love* as neceſſary to *Fruition*; but on the other hand, there ſeems no ſuch neceſſity of this Union to the *Fruition*, but that it may be conceiv'd entire without it. And therefore

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why we ſhould multiply Difficulties without cauſe, I ſee no reaſon. For my part, I ſhould think my ſelf ſufficiently Happy in the clear Viſion of my Maker, nor ſhould I deſire any thing beyond the Prayer of *Moſes: I beſeech thee ſhew me thy Glory*, Exod. 33. 18.

22. For what an infinite Satisfaction, Happineſs and Delight it muſt needs be, to have a clear and intimate Perception of that Primitive and Original Beauty, Perfection and Harmony, whereof all that appears fair and excellent, either to our Senſes or Underſtandings in this Life, is but a faint Imitation, a pale Reflection! To ſee him who is the Fountain of all Being, containing in himſelf the Perfection, not only of all that is, but of all that is poſſible to be, *The* Alpha *and* Omega, *the beginning and ending, the firſt and the laſt, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty!* Rev. 1. 8. To ſee Him, of whom all Nature is the Image, of whom all the Harmony, both of the viſible and inviſible World, is but the Eccho! To ſee him, who (as *Plato* divinely and magnificently expreſſes it) is πολὺ πέλαγος τοῦ καλοῦ αὐτὸν καθ' αὑτὸν μεθ' αὑτοῦ μονοειδὲς ἀεὶ ὄν. The Immenſe Ocean of Beauty, which is it ſelf, by it ſelf, with it ſelf, uniform, always Exiſting! This certainly will affect the Soul with all the pleaſing and raviſhing Tranſports of Love and Deſire, Joy and Delight, Wonder and Amazement, together with a ſettled Acquieſcence and Complacency of Spirit; only leſs infinite than the Lovelineſs that cauſes it, and the peculiar Complacency of him who rejoyces in his own fulneſs, and the Comprehenſions of Eternity. We ſee how

ſtrangely

ſtrangely our Senſe of *Seeing* is affected with the Harmony of Colours; and our Senſe of *Hearing*, with the Harmony of Sounds; inſomuch, that ſome have been too weak for the Enjoyment, and have grown Mad with the Sublimate of Pleaſure. And if ſo, what then ſhall we think of the *Beatific Viſion*; the Pleaſure of which will ſo far tranſcend that of the other, as God, who is all over Harmony and Proportion, exceeds the ſweet Melody of Sounds and Colours; and the perception of the Mind is more vigorous, quick and piercing, than that of the Senſes? This is *perfect Happineſs*, this is the Tree of Life which grows in the midſt of the Paradiſe of God; this is Heaven, which while the Learned Diſpute about, the Good only Enjoy. But I ſhall not venture to Soar any longer in theſe Heights; I find the Æther too Thin here to Breath in long, and the Brightneſs of the Region flaſhes too ſtrong upon my tender Senſe; I ſhall therefore haſten to deſcend from the Mount of God, leſt I grow Giddy with Speculation, and loſe thoſe Secrets which I have learnt there, the *Cabala* of Felicity.

23. And now (Sir) I come to conſider your Queſtion, *viz. Wherein the greateſt Happineſs Attainable by Man in this Life, does conſiſt.* Concerning which, there is as great variety of Opinions among Philoſophers, as there is among Geographers, about the Seat of Paradiſe. The Learned *Varro* reckons up no leſs than 288 ſeveral Opinions about it; and yet notwithſtanding the Number of Writers who have bequeathed Volumes upon this Subject to Poſterity, they ſeem to have been in the Dark in no-

nothing more than in this, and (excepting only a few *Platoniſts*, who placed Man's greateſt End in the Contemplation of Truth) they ſeem to have undertaken nothing ſo unhappily, as when they eſſay'd to Write of Happineſs. Some meaſure their Happineſs by the high-tide of their Riches, as the *Egyptians* did the Fertility of the Year by the increaſe of the River *Nile*. Others place it in the Pleaſures of Senſe; others in Honour and Greatneſs. But theſe and the like, were Men of the Common Herd, low groveling Souls, that either underſtood not the Dignity of Human Nature, or elſe forgot that they were Men. But there were others of a *Diviner Genius, and Sublimer Spirit.*

Queis meliore luto finxit præcordia Titan.

Who had a more generous Blood running in their Veins, which made them put a juſt Value upon themſelves, and ſcorn to place their greateſt Happineſs in that which they ſhould Bluſh to Enjoy. And thoſe were the *Stoics* and the *Peripatetics*, who both place the greateſt Happineſs of this Life in the Actions of Virtue, with this only difference, That whereas the former are contented with *Naked Virtue*, the later require ſome other Collateral Things to the farther Accompliſhment of Happineſs; ſuch as are Health and Strength of Body, a Competent Livelyhood, and the like.

24. And this Opinion has been ſubſcribed to by the Hands of eminent Moraliſts in all Ages. And as it is Venerable for its Antiquity, ſo has it gain'd no ſmall Authority from the Pen of a great Modern Writer,

Writer, (*Deſcartes*) who reſolves the greateſt Happineſs of this Life into the right uſe of the Will; which conſiſts in this, That a Man have a firm and conſtant purpoſe, always to do that which he ſhall judge to be beſt.

25. I confeſs, the Practice of Virtue is a very great Inſtrument of Happineſs; and that there is a great deal more true Satisfaction and ſolid Content to be found in a conſtant courſe of well-living, than in all the ſoft Careſſes of the moſt ſtudied Luxury, or the Voluptuouſneſs of a *Seraglio*. And therefore, I have oftentimes been exceedingly pleaſed in the reading of a certain Paſſage in that Divine Moraliſt *Hierocles*, where he tells you, that the Virtuous Man lives much more pleaſantly than the Vicious Man. *For* (ſays he) *all Pleaſure is the Companion of Action, it has no Subſiſtence of its own, but accompanies us in our doing ſuch and ſuch Things. Hence 'tis that the worſer Actions are accompanied with the meaner Pleaſures. So that the good Man does not only excel the wicked Man in what is good, but has alſo the Advantage of him even in Pleaſure, for whoſe ſake alone he is wicked. For he that chuſes Pleaſure with Filthineſs, altho for a while he be ſweetly and deliciouſly entertain'd; yet at laſt, through the Filthineſs annexed to his Enjoyment, he is brought to a painful Repentance. But now he that prefers Virtue with all her Labours and Difficulties, though at firſt for want of uſe ſits heavy upon him, yet by the Conjunction of Good he alleviates the Labour, and at laſt enjoys pure and unallay'd Pleaſure with his Virtue. So that of neceſſity, that Life is moſt unhappy, which is moſt wicked; and that moſt pleaſant, which is moſt virtuous.*

26. Now

26. Now this I readily ſubmit to as a great Truth, That the degrees of *Happineſs* vary according to the degrees of *Virtue*; and conſequently, that that Life which is moſt *Virtuous*, is moſt *Happy*, with reference to thoſe that are Vicious or leſs Virtuous, every degree of Virtue having a proportionate degree of Happineſs accompanying it, (which is all, I ſuppoſe, that excellent Author intends.) But I do not think the moſt Virtuous Life *ſo* the moſt Happy, but that it may become Happier, unleſs ſomething more be comprehended in the word (Virtue) than the *Stoics*, *Peripatetics*, and the generality of other Moraliſts underſtand by it. For with them it ſignifies no more but only ſuch a firm ἕξις, or habitude of the Will to good; whereby we are conſtantly diſpoſed, notwithſtanding the contrary tendency of our Paſſions, to perform the neceſſary Offices of Life. This they call Moral or Civil Virtue; and although this brings always Happineſs enough with it to make amends for all the Difficulties which attend the practiſe of it: Yet I am not of Opinion, that the greateſt Happineſs attainable by Man in this Life, conſiſts in it. But there is another and a higher Senſe of the word, which frequently occurs in the *Pythagorean* and *Platonic* Writings, *viz. Contemplation*, and the Unitive Way of Religion. And this they call *Divine Virtue*. I allow of the Diſtinction, but I would not be thought to derive it from the Principle, as if Moral Virtue were *acquired*, and this *infuſed* (for to ſpeak ingenuouſly, infuſed Virtue ſeem'd ever to me as a Paradox in Divinity, as Occult Qualities in Philoſophy) but from the Nobleneſs of the Object, the Object of the former being Moral Good,

Good, and the Object of the later, God himſelf. The former is a State of Proficiency, the later of Perfection. The former is a State of Difficulty and Contention, the later of Eaſe and Serenity. The former is employ'd in maſtering the Paſſions, and regulating the Actions of Common Life, the later in Divine Meditation, and the Extaſies of *Seraphic* Love. He that has only the former, is like *Moſes* with much difficulty climbing up to the Holy Mount; but he that has the later, is like the ſame Perſon Converſing with God on the ſerene Top of it, and ſhining with the Rays of anticipated Glory. So that this later ſuppoſes the Acquiſition of the former, and conſequently, has all the Happineſs pertaining to the other, beſides what it adds of its own. This is the laſt Stage of Human Perfection, the utmoſt *round* of the Ladder whereby we Aſcend to Heaven; one Step higher is Glory. Here then will I build my Tabernacle, for *it is good to be here.* Here will I ſet up my Pillar of Reſt, here will I fix; for why ſhould I Travel on farther in purſuit of any greater Happineſs, ſince Man in this Station is but a little lower *than the Angels*, one *remove* from Heaven? Here certainly is the greateſt Happineſs, as well as Perfection attainable by Man in this State of Imperfection. For ſince that Happineſs, which is abſolutely Perfect and Compleat, conſiſts in the clear and intimate Viſion, and moſt ardent Love of God, hence we ought to take our Meaſures, and conclude that to be the greateſt Happineſs attainable in this State, which is the greateſt Participation of the other. And that can be nothing elſe but the Unitive

Way

Way of Religion, which conſiſts of the Contemplation and Love of God. I ſhall ſay ſomething of each of theſe ſeverally, and ſomething of the Unitive Way of Religion, which is the reſult of both; and ſo ſhut up this Diſcourſe.

27. By Contemplation in general (θεωρία) we underſtand an Application of the Underſtanding to ſome Truth. But here in this place, we take the word in a more peculiar Senſe, as it ſignifies an habitual, attentive, ſteddy Application or Converſion of the Spirit to God, and his Divine Perfections. Of this the Maſters of *Myſtic Theology*, commonly make fifteen Degrees. The firſt is intuition of Truth; the ſecond is a Retirement of all the Vigour and Strength of the Faculties into the innermoſt parts of the Soul; the third is Spiritual Silence; the fourth is Reſt; the fifth is Union; the ſixth is the Hearing of the ſtill Voice of God; the ſeventh is Spiritual Slumber; the eighth is Ecſtacy; the ninth is Rapture; the tenth is the Corporeal Appearance of Chriſt and the Saints; the eleventh is the Imaginary Appearance of the Same; the twelfth is the Intellectual Viſion of God; the thirteenth is the Viſion of God in Obſcurity; the fourteenth is an admirable Manifeſtation of God; the fifteenth is a clear and intuitive Viſion of him, ſuch as St. *Auſtin* and *Tho. Aquinas* attribute to St. *Paul*, when he was wrapt up into the third Heaven. Others of them reckon ſeven degrees only, (*viz.*) Taſte, Deſire, Satiety, Ebriety, Security, Tranquility; but the name of the ſeventh (they ſay) is known only to God.

28. I

28. I ſhall not ſtand to examine the *Scale* of this Diviſion; perhaps there may be a kind of a *Pythagoric* Superſtition in the number. But this I think I may affirm in general, that the Soul may be *wound* up to a moſt ſtrange degree of *Abſtraction*, by a ſilent and ſteddy Contemplation of God. *Plato* defines Contemplation to be λύσις καὶ χωρισμὸς τῆς ψυχῆς ἀπὸ σώματος, a Solution, and a Separation of the Soul from the Body. And ſome of the ſeverer *Platoniſts* have been of Opinion, that 'tis poſſible for a Man by mere intention of Thought, not only to withdraw the Soul from all Commerce with the Senſes, but even really to ſeparate it from the Body, to untwiſt the Ligaments of his Frame, and by degrees to reſolve himſelf into the State of the Dead. And thus the *Jews* expreſs the manner of the Death of *Moſes*, calling it *Oſculum Oris Dei*, *the Kiſs of God's Mouth*. That is, that he breath'd out his Soul by the mere Strength and Energy of Contemplation, and expired in the Embraces of his Maker. A happy way of Dying! How Ambitious ſhould I be of ſuch a Conveyance, were it practicable? How paſſionately ſhould I joyn with the Church in the Canticles: Φιλησάτω με ἀπὸ φιλημάτων στόματος αὐτοῦ, *Let him Kiſs me with the Kiſſes of his Mouth*, Cant. 1. 2.

29. But however this be determin'd, certain it is, that there are exceeding great Meaſures of Abſtraction in Contemplation; ſo great, that ſometimes whether a Man be in the Body, or out of the Body, he himſelf can hardly tell. And conſequently, the Soul in theſe *Præludiums* of Death, theſe Neighbourhoods of Separation, muſt needs have brighter glimpſes, and more *Beatific Ideas* of God,

than in a State void of theſe Elevations; and conſequently, muſt Love him with greater Ardency. Which is the next Thing I am to conſider.

30. The Love of God in general, may be conſidered either as it is purely Intellectual, or as it is a Paſſion. The firſt is, When the Soul, upon an Apprehenſion of God as a good, delectable, and agreeable Object, joyns her ſelf to him by the Will. The later is, When the Motion of the Will is accompany'd with a ſenſible Commotion of the Spirits, and an Eſtuation of the Blood. Some I know, are of Opinion, that 'tis not poſſible for a Man to be affected with this ſenſitive Love of God, which is a Paſſion; becauſe there is nothing in God which falls under our Imagination; and conſequently (the Imagination being the only Medium of Conveyance) it cannot be propagated from the Intellectual Part to the Senſitive. Whereupon they affirm, that none are capable of this ſenſitive paſſionate Love of God, but Chriſtians, who enjoy the Myſtery of the Incarnation, whereby they know God has condeſcended ſo far as to Cloath himſelf with Fleſh, and to become like one of us. But 'tis not all the Sophiſtry of the *cold Logicians*, that ſhall work me out of the Belief of what I feel and know, and rob me of the ſweeteſt Entertainment of my Life, the *Paſſionate Love of God*. Whatever ſome Men pretend, who are Strangers to all the affectionate Heats of Religion, and therefore make their Philoſophy a Plea for their Indevotion, and extinguiſh all Holy Ardours with a Syllogiſm; yet I am firmly perſuaded, that our Love of God may be not only Paſſionate, but even *Wonderfully* ſo, and

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exceeding the Love of Women. 'Tis an Experimental, and therefore undeniable Truth, That Paſſion is a great Inſtrument of Devotion; and accordingly we find, that Men of the moſt warm and pathetick Tempers and amorous Complexions, (provided they have but Conſideration enough withal to fix upon the right Object) prove the greateſt Votaries in Religion. And upon this account it is, that to heighten our Love of God in our Religious Addreſſes, we endeavour to excite our Paſſions by Muſick, which would be to as little purpoſe as the Fanatick thinks 'tis, if there were not ſuch a Thing as the *Paſſionate Love of God.* But then as to the Objection, I anſwer with the excellent *Deſcartes*, That altho in God, who is the Object of our Love, we can imagin nothing, yet we can imagin that our Love, which conſiſts in this, that we would unite our ſelves to the Object beloved, and conſider our ſelves as it were a Part of it. And the ſole Idea of this very Conjunction, is enough to ſtir up a Heat about the Heart, and ſo kindle a very vehement Paſſion. To which I add, That although the Beauty or Amiableneſs of God, be not the ſame with that which we ſee in Corporeal Beings, and conſequently, cannot directly fall within the Sphere of the Imagination, yet it is ſomething Analogous to it; and that very Analogy is enough to excite a Paſſion. And this I think ſufficient to warrant my general diviſion of the Love of God into Intellectual and Senſitive.

31. But there is a more peculiar Acceptation of the Love of God proper to this place. And it is that which we call *Seraphic.* By which I underſtand in

ſhort, that Love of God which is the Effect of an intenſe Contemplation of him. This differs not from the other in kind, but only in degree, and that it does exceedingly, in as much as the thoughtful Contemplative Man (as I hinted before) has clearer Perceptions, and livelier Impreſſions of the Divine Beauty, the lovely Attributes and Perfection of God, than he whoſe Soul is more deeply ſet in the Fleſh, and lies groveling in the bottom of the Dungeon.

32. That the Nature of this Seraphic Love may be the better underſtood, I ſhall conſider how many degrees there may be in the Love of God. And I think the Computation of *Bellarmin*, *lib.* 2. *de monachis*, *cap.* 2. is acccurate enough. He makes Four. The firſt is to Love God proportionably to his Lovelineſs, that is, with an *infinite Love*; and this degree is peculiar to God himſelf. The ſecond is to Love him, not proportionably to his Lovelineſs, but to the utmoſt Capacity of a Creature; and this degree is peculiar to Saints and Angels in Heaven. The third is to love him not proportionably to his Lovelineſs, nor to the utmoſt Capacity of a Creature, abſolutely conſider'd; but to the utmoſt Capacity of a *Mortal Creature* in this Life. And this (he ſays) is proper to the Religious. The fourth is to Love him not proportionably to his Lovelineſs, nor to the utmoſt Capacity of a Creature, conſider'd either abſolutely, or with reſpect to this Life, but only ſo as to Love nothing equally with him or above him. That is, not to do any Thing contrary to the Divine Love. And this is abſolute indiſpenſable Duty, leſs than which will not qualifie us for the Enjoyment of God hereafter.

33. Now

33. Now this *Seraphic Love* which we here Diſcourſe of, is in the third degree: When a Man, after many degrees of Abſtraction from the Animal Life, many a profound and ſteddy Meditation upon the Excellencies of God, ſees ſuch a vaſt Ocean of Beauty and Perfection in him, that he loves him to the utmoſt ſtretch of his Power; *When he ſits under his Shadow with great delight, and his Fruit is ſweet to his Taſte*, Cant. 2, 3. When he Conſecrates and Devotes himſelf wholly to him, and has no Paſſion for Inferiour Objects. When he is raviſhed with the Delights of his Service, and breaths out ſome of his Soul to him in every Prayer. When he is delighted with *Anthems* of Praiſe and Adoration, more than with Marrow and Fatneſs, and Feaſts upon *Alleluiah*. When he melts in a *Calenture of Devotion*, and his *Soul breaketh out with fervent Deſire*, Pſal. 119. When the one thing he *delights* in, is to Converſe with God in the *Beauty of Holineſs*; and the one thing he *deſires*, *to ſee him as he is in Heaven*. This is Seraphic Love, and this with Contemplation, makes up that which the Myſtic Divines ſtile the Unitive Way of Religion: It is called ſo, becauſe it Unites us to God in the moſt *excellent manner* that we are capable of in this Life. By Union here, I do not underſtand that which is Local or Preſential, becauſe I conſider God as *Omnipreſent*. Neither do I mean an Union of Grace, (as they call it) whereby we are reconciled to God, or an Union of Charity, whereof it is ſaid, *He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him*, Jo. 4. 16. The firſt of theſe being as common to the inanimate Things, as to the moſt *Extaſi'd* Soul upon Earth. And the

two laſt being common to all good Men, who indeed love God, but yet want the Excellency of *Contemplation*, and the Myſtic Union. The Union then which I here ſpeak of, is that which is between the Faculty and the Object. Which conſiſts in ſome Habitude or Operation of one toward the other. The Faculties here, are the Underſtanding and Will, the Object God, and the Operations Contemplation and Love. The reſult of which two is the Myſtic Union. Which, according to this complex Notion of it that I have here delivered, is thus moſt admirably repreſented by the excellent Biſhop *Taylour*: *It is* (ſays he) *a Prayer of quietneſs and ſilence, and a Meditation extraordinary; a Diſcourſe without variety; a Viſion and Intuition of Divine Excellencies; an immediate entry into an Orb of Light; and a reſolution of all our Faculties into Sweetneſs, Affections, and Starings upon the* Divine Beauty. *And is carried on to Extaſies, Raptures, Suſpenſions, Elevations, Abſtractions, and Apprehenſions Beatifical.* Great Exemplar, p. 60.

34. I make no doubt, but that many an Honeſt Pious Soul arrives to the Heavenly *Canaan*, who is not fed with this *Manna* in the Wilderneſs. But though every one muſt not expect theſe Antepaſts of Felicity that is Virtuous, yet none elſe muſt. *Paradiſe* was never open but to a State of *Innocence*. But neither is that enough. No, this Mount of God's Preſence is fenced not only from the Profane, but alſo from the moderately Virtuous. 'Tis the Priviledge of Angelical Diſpoſitions, and the Reward of eminent Piety, and an excellent Religion, to be admitted to theſe Divine Repaſts, theſe Feaſts of Love.

Love. And here I place the greateſt Happineſs attainable by Man in this Life, as being the neareſt Approach to the State of the Bleſſed above, the *outer-Court* of Heaven.

35. Theſe (Sir) are my Thoughts concerning Happineſs. I might have Spun them out into a greater length, but I think a little Plat of Ground *thick-ſown*, is better than a great Field, which for the moſt part of it lies Fallow. I have endeavour'd to deliver my Notions with as much Perſpicuity, and in as good Method as I could, and ſo to anſwer all the Ends of Copiouſneſs, with the advantage of a ſhorter Cut. If I appear ſingular in any of my Notions, 'tis not out of an induſtrious Affectation of Novelty, but becauſe in the compoſing of this Diſcourſe (the Meditation of a few broken Hours in a Garden) I conſulted more my own Experimental Notices of Things, and private Reflections, than the Writings of others. So that if ſometimes I happen to be in the Road, and ſometimes in a Way by my ſelf, 'tis no wonder. I affect neither the one nor the other, but write as I think. Which as I do at other times, ſo more eſpecially when I ſubſcribe my ſelf

SIR,

Yours moſt Affectionately,

All-Souls College,
Apr. 18. 1683.

J. N.

A Letter of Reſolution concerning ſome Paſſages *in the foregoing Treatiſe, to the ſame* Perſon.

SIR,

1. THE kind Entertainment which you gave my *Idea of Happineſs*, does not only encourage, but oblige me to endeavour the ſatisfaction of that Scruple, which the Peruſal of it has occaſion'd. I cannot but highly commend your ſearching Curioſity, in deſiring farther ſatisfaction concerning a matter of ſo ſublime and excellent a Nature (for the Tree of *Paradiſe* is *good for Food, pleaſant to the Eye, and a Tree to be deſired to make one Wiſe*) though you muſt give me leave to wonder, that you would not enquire at a better Oracle. But ſince you are pleas'd to be of the Opinion, that few have made this Subject ſo Familiar to their Meditation as I have, I cannot with any pretence decline your Requeſt, though perhaps by my performing it, I ſhall work you into a contrary Perſuaſion.

2. Sir, You ſay you ſhould like my Notion concerning the Reality of that which is uſually call'd *Imaginary Happineſs*, that is, (as you well explain both your own and my meaning) that although the Object may be an *Imaginary Good*, yet the Happineſs which conſiſts in the Fruition of that Object, will not be Imaginary too, but Real; and conſequently, that 'tis impoſſible for a Man to ſeem to himſelf to be Happy, and not to be really ſo, all Happi-

Happineſs conſiſting in Opinion. This Notion, you ſay, you ſhould like rarely well, could you free your ſelf from one Difficulty which it engages you upon; (*viz.*) That hereafter, in the State of Glory, either one Saint ſhall think himſelf as Happy as another, or not; if not, this muſt needs occaſion Envy or Diſcontent; but if one ſhall think himſelf as Happy as another, then, according to my *Hypotheſis*, That Opinion is the *Meaſure of Happineſs*, 'twill follow, that he will already be ſo; and this brings in Equality of Happineſs, which you look upon (and I think juſtly too) as another Abſurdity.

3. I confeſs, Sir, this Argument is pretty ſubtle and ſurprizing; but I conceive the Knots of it may be untied by this Anſwer. Firſt, It may be juſtly queſtion'd, Whether the firſt part of your *Dilemma* be neceſſarily attended with the appendant Abſurdity. 'Tis true indeed, not to think ones ſelf as Happy as another, is the Spring of Envy or Diſcontent, among Men in this World; but whether this be the *genuin* and *conſtant* Effect of that Conſideration, or whether it ought not rather to be aſcribed to the preſent Infirmities and Imperfections of Human Nature, may admit Diſpute. But in caſe this Abſurdity does inſeparably cleave to the firſt part, then I betake my ſelf to the later, and affirm, That in Heaven one Saint ſhall think himſelf as Happy as another. Then, according to my own Notion (ſay you) it will follow, that he *is really* ſo. No, I deny the Conſequence, the invalidity of which will plainly appear, by diſtinguiſhing the Ambiguity of the *Phraſe*.

For

For this Expreſſion, *One Saint thinks himſelf as Happy as another*, may be taken in a double ſenſe; either that he thinks himſelf as Happy as he himſelf thinks that other; or, that he thinks himſelf as Happy as that other thinks himſelf. I grant, ſhould one Saint think himſelf as Happy as another in this later Senſe of the Phraſe, he would, according to my *Hypotheſis*, really be ſo; ſo that this would bring in Equality. And therefore in this Senſe, I deny the Propoſition; and that without the leaſt danger of ſplitting upon the firſt Abſurdity. But for the former Senſe, that has no ſuch levelling Quality; for to ſay that I think my ſelf as Happy as I think another, amounts to no more than this, That in my Apprehenſion another does not exceed me in Happineſs: But tho he does not in my Apprehenſion, yet he may in *reality*; for tho my Opinion gives Meaſures to my own Happineſs, yet it does not to another Man's. So that one Saint may be ſaid to think himſelf as Happy as another in the former Senſe, without equalling the Happineſs of the Bleſſed; tho, I confeſs, I ſhould much rather adhere to the contrary Propoſition, (*viz.*) That *one ſhall not think himſelf as Happy as another*, in caſe ſuch a Opinion be not neceſſarily attended with *Envy* or *Diſcontent*. Becauſe it ſeems unreaſonable to make them ignorant of the degrees of one anothers Bliſs, unleſs that Ignorance be neceſſarily required to prevent the alledg'd Abſurdities. But I determin nothing in this Point; my buſineſs was only to break the Force of your *Dilemma*, and to ſhew that my Notion does not involve you in the Difficulty ſuppoſed. This, Sir, is all that I think neceſſary

ceſſary to ſay to a Perſon of your Apprehenſion; and therefore I end theſe nice Speculations with this profitable reflection, That altho the Notion of Happineſs be intricate and obſcure, yet the means of attaining it are plain; and therefore 'twould be moſt adviſable both for you and me, chiefly to apply our ſelves to the later here; and we ſhall underſtand the former with the beſt ſort of Knowledg, that of Experience, hereafter.

Yours

J. N.

Ana-

Another Letter to the ſame Perſon *concerning the true Notion of* Plato's Ideas, *and of* Platonic Love.

Tanta vis in Ideis conſtituitur, ut niſi his intellectis, ſapiens eſſe nemo poſſit.
Auguſtinus Tom. 4. Pap. 548. Q. 46.

SIR,

1. WEre I not as well acquainted with your ſingular Modeſty, as I am with your intellectual Accompliſhments, I ſhould readily conclude, that your directing your Enquiries to me, proceeded not ſo much from a Curioſity to improve your own Knowledg, as to try mine. But when I conſider, that you are ignorant of nothing ſo much as of your own Worth and Abilities, I begin to think it poſſible that you may propoſe theſe Queſtions, even to me, out of a deſire to be inform'd. Which way ſoever it is, I acknowledg my ſelf to be obliged to you for affording me an opportunity of ſerving you, eſpecially in ſuch an Inſtance, where I cannot gratifie your Requeſt without humouring my own *Genius* at the ſame time. For indeed to my Apprehenſion, there is not a finer or more ſublime Piece of Speculation in all *Plato*'s Philoſophy, than that of his Ideas, and that of his Love, tho it has

has undergone the ſame hard Fate with many other excellent Theories; firſt to be either *ignorantly miſunderſtood*, or *maliciouſly miſrepreſented*; and then popularly vilify'd and decry'd.

2. To do right therefore to the Name of this great Man, as well as to ſatisfie your Demands, I ſhall firſt propoſe the general Miſtake; and then rectify it; Firſt preſent you with the ſuppos'd Opinion of *Plato*; and then with the true and genuin one. I begin with his *Ideas*, by which 'tis taken for granted by the generality of Writers, eſpecially thoſe of the *Peripatetic Order*, that he underſtood univerſal Natures, or abſtract Eſſences, ſubſiſting eternally by themſelves, ſeparate both from the Mind of God and all ſingular Beings; according to which, as ſo many Patterns, all Singulars are form'd. As for inſtance; That a Man, not this or that in particular, but an univerſal Man, or a Man in general, ſhould exiſt by it ſelf Eternally, according to which all particular Men were made. Sir, I ſuppoſe you can hardly forbear ſmiling at the oddneſs of the Conceit; but as ridiculous as you may think it, 'tis ſaid to be maintained by no leſs a Man then *Plato*; and has been thought of that moment too, that Multitudes of great Men have ſet themſelves very ſeriouſly to Confute it, as a dangerous Hereſie; and have oppoſed it with as much Zeal, as ever St. *Auſtin* did the *Manichees*, or the *Pelagians*.

3. But now, that this Opinion was not only for its Abſurdity and Contradictiouſneſs unworthy of the contemplative and refin'd Spirit of *Plato*; but was alſo apparently none of his, I dare ſay any capable Perſon will be convinc'd, that ſhall heedfully and

and impartially examine and compare the Works of *Plato*; And this *Ariſtotle* himſelf muſt needs have known (he having been his conſtant Auditor for Twenty Years together) but only he wanted a Shadow to Fight with; and ſo Father'd this monſtrous Opinion upon his Maſter. And of this diſingenuity of *Ariſtotle*, together with other Abuſes, *Plato* himſelf complain'd, while alive, in theſe words, Ἀριστοτέλης ἡμᾶς ἀπελάκτισε καθαπερεὶ τὰ πωλάρια γενηθέντα τὴν μητέρα, as is recorded by *Laertius* in the Life of *Ariſtotle*.

4. And now, that the groſſneſs of this Abuſe may the more fully appear, I will in the next place preſent you with another Senſe of *Plato*'s *Ideas*; and ſuch as by a more than ordinary Acquaintance with his Works, I know to be the true and genuin one. Know then, that *Plato* conſidering the World as an Effect of an intellectual Agent, and that in the Operations of all other Artificers or *rational Efficients*, there muſt be ſome Form in the Mind of the Artificer preſuppoſed to the Work (for otherwiſe what difference will there be between a fortuitous Effect, and an intended one; and how comes the Effect to be of this Species rather than another?) thought it neceſſary to ſuppoſe αἰώνια παραδείγματα, Eternal *Forms*, Models or Patterns, of all the Species of Being in Nature, exiſting in the Mind of God. And theſe he calls Ideas. I ſay, exiſting in the Mind of God; for there is not the leaſt Intimation in all *Plato*'s Works of any ſuch *Ideas*, exiſting ſeparately from the Divine Intellect; nor do the great Maſters of *Platonic Philoſophy*, *Plotinus*, *Porphyrius*, *Procles*, or any other that I know of. make mention of any

ſuch

ſuch Spectres and Ghoſts of Entity. No, this Monſter was hatch'd in *Ariſtotle*'s Brain, and I believe did never enter *Plato*'s Head, ſo much as in a Dream. For he is not only ſilent about it, but does in ſeveral places expreſly aſſert the contrary; particularly in his *Timæus*, where, of ſet purpoſe, he deſcribes the Origin of the World; he ſays, that God made the World, according to that Pattern or Idea which he had in his Mind. The ſame you will find more amply confirm'd in his *Hippias*, his *Parmenides*, and his ſixth Book of *Repub.* and many other places. And theſe *Ideas* he calls τὰ πρῶτα νοητὰ, *the firſt Intelligibles*, and τῶν ὄντων μέτρα, *the Meaſures of the things that are*, implying, That as all Things were form'd according to theſe ſpecifical Platforms, ſo their Truth muſt be meaſured from their Conformity to them. And in this Senſe muſt be taken that Common Axiom of the Schools, That *the Truth of a thing is its Conformity with the Divine Intellect*; for it is in no other Senſe intelligible, as you will diſcern in the Proceſs.

5. But now, leſt you ſhould imagine that this *Platonic Hypotheſis* of *Ideas* exiſting in the Divine Mind, ſhould ill comport with the ſimplicity of God, or claſh with that approved Doctrin of the Schools, *Nihil eſt in Deo quod non ſit Deus*, (which is another Cavil of the *Antiplatoniſts*) you are to underſtand, that *Plato* by his *Ideas*, does not mean any real Eſſence diſtinct from the Divine Eſſence, but only the Divine Eſſence it ſelf with this Connotation, as it is variouſly imitable or participable by Created Beings; and conſequently, according to the multifariouſneſs of this imitability, ſo are

the

the Poſſibilities of Being. Which is as fine a Notion as was ever framed by the Mind of Man; and that it is his, you will find if you conſult his *Parmenides*. And this will ſerve to help us out with another Difficulty; for whereas *Plato* makes his *Divine Ideas*, not only the *exemplary* Cauſes of Things, but alſo (which is a Conſequent to the former) the meaſure of their Truth, this may ſeem to fall in with their Opinion, who make all Truth dependent upon the Speculative Underſtanding of God; that is, That God does not underſtand a thing ſo, becauſe it is ſo in its own Nature, but that a thing is therefore ſo, becauſe God is pleas'd ſo to underſtand it. Which is an Opinion full of Miſchief and Abſurdity, as you may ſee compendiouſly, and yet evidently demonſtrated in Dr. *Ruſt*'s little Diſcourſe of Truth. Now for the clearing this Difficulty, 'tis to be obſerved, that the Eſſence of God, according to *Plato*, is diſtinguiſhed into νῦς ποιητὸς, and νῦς νοητὸς, the Counterpart whereof in *Engliſh*, is *Conceptive* and *Exhibitive*. By the Mind of God *Exhibitive*, is meant the Eſſence of God, as thus or thus imitable, or participable by any Creature; and this is the ſame with an *Idea*. By the Mind of God *Conceptive*, is meant a reflex Act of God's Underſtanding upon his own Eſſence as *Exhibitive*, or as thus and thus imitable. Now if you conſider the Divine Underſtanding as *Conceptive* or *Speculative*, it does not make its Object, but ſuppoſe it; (as all *Speculative Underſtanding* does) neither is the Truth of the Object to be meaſured from its Conformity with that, but the Truth of *that* from its Conformity with its Object.

But

But if you conſider the Divine Underſtanding as Exhibitive, then its Truth does not depend upon its Conformity with the Nature of Things; but on the contrary, the Truth of the Nature of Things depends upon its Conformity with it. For the Divine Eſſence is not thus or thus imitable, becauſe ſuch and ſuch things are in Being; but ſuch and ſuch things are in Being, becauſe the Divine Eſſence is thus and thus imitable; for had not the Divine Eſſence been thus imitable, ſuch and ſuch Beings would not have been poſſible. And thus is *Plato* to be underſtood, when he founds the Truth of things upon their Conformity with the *Divine Ideas*; and thus muſt the Schools mean too, by that forementiond *Axiom* concerning *Tranſcendental Truth*, if they will ſpeak Senſe, as I noted above.

6. And now, Sir, from *Plato*'s *Ideas* thus amiably ſet forth, the *Tranſition* methinks, is very Natural to Love. And concerning this I ſhall account in the ſame Method: Firſt, by pointing out the popular Miſapprehenſions about it; and then by exhibiting a true Notion of it. *Platonic Love* is a Thing in every Bodies Mouth; but I ſcarce find any that think or ſpeak accurately of it. The Miſtakes which I obſerve are chiefly theſe: Some of the groſſer Underſtanders ſuppoſe, that *Plato* by his Love meant παιδεραστία, the Love of Males; but the occaſion of this Conceit was from a paſſage in his *Convivium*, where he brings in *Ariſtophanes*, ſpeaking favourably that way. But he that ſhall from hence conclude, *Plato* a *proſtitute* to that vile Paſſion, may as well conclude a *Dramatic* Poet to be an Atheiſt, or a Whoremaſter, becauſe he repreſents

thoſe of that Character. But that Divine *Plato* intended nothing leſs than to Countenance any ſuch Thing, is evident from the whole ſcope and purport of that Dialogue, and from other places, where he expreſly condemns it, and rejects it with great Abhorrence; particularly in the firſt of his *de legibus*, where he calls it, τὸ παρὰ φύσιν τόλμημα, *an unnatural Attempt*. Others by *Platonic Love* underſtand the Love of Souls; and this indeed has ſomething of Truth in it, only it is too narrow and particular.

7. Others take *Platonic Love* to be a deſire of imprinting any Excellency, whether Moral or Intellectual, in the Minds of Beautiful Young Men by Inſtruction; and ſo likewiſe of enjoying your own Perfections reflected from the Mind of another, mix'd with and recommended by the Beauty of the Body. According to the uſual ſaying, *Gratior e Pulchro*, &c. And thus *Socrates* was ſaid to love his Beautiful Pupils *Phædrus* and *Alcibiades*. Others meaſure the Nature of *Platonic Love*, not from the Object (to which they ſuppoſe it indifferent) but from the manner of the Act. And according to theſe, that Man is ſaid to love *Platonically*, that does *Caſſo delectamine amare*, love at a diſtance, that never deſigns a cloſe Fruition of the Object, whatever it be, whether Senſual or Intellectual; but chuſes to dwell in the Suburbs, pleaſing himſelf with remote Proſpects; and makes a Miſtreſs of his own Deſire. And this is the receiv'd Notion, and that which People generally mean when they talk of *Platonic Love*. But this too is far enough from the right; for tho *Platonic Love* does not aim at the Fruition of ſenſual Objects, yet it deſigns

designs the Fruition of its own Object as much as as any other Love does. That therefore which distinguishes *Platonic Love*, is not the manner of the Act above-mention'd, but the peculiarity of the Object. And what that is, must be collected from the Design of *Plato* in that Dialogue, where he treats purposely of it, his *Convivium*. Which is briefly to shew the manner of the Soul's assent to God by Love. For *Plato* makes the Happiness of Man to consist in the Contemplation and Love of God, whom he calls the *Idea of Beauty*. But now because this *Idea of Beauty* (God) is of too sublime and refined Excellency to be immediately fastned upon by our Love, he recommends to us μέθοδος ἀνόδου, a *Method of Assent*; which is from loving the Beauty we see in Bodies, to pass on to the Love of the Beauty of the Soul; from the Beauty of the Soul, to the Beauty of Virtue; and lastly, from the Beauty of Virtue, ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ πέλαγος τοῦ καλοῦ αὐτὸ τὸ ἀγαθὸν τὸ ἔραστον καὶ ἐφετὸν, to the immense *Ocean of Beauty*, &c. For so have I observ'd a tender Infant's Eye, not enduring to gaze directly upon the too powerful Excellence of the Meridian Sun, chuse to entertain it self with the Abatements of corrected and reflected Light, and take up with the feebler Refreshments of lesser Beauties for a while, till at length the Faculty grows more confirm'd, and dares encounter the Sun in his Strength. And these are the Steps of the *Sanctuary*. So that *Platonic Love* is the Love of Beauty abstracted from all sensual Applications, and desire of Corporal Contact, as it leads us on to the first Original Beauty, God; or more plainly thus: The Assent of the Soul to the Love of the

Divine Beauty, by the Love of abſtracted Beauty in Bodies. This Love of abſtracted Beauty in Bodies, he calls, Ἔρως Οὐράνιος, *Celeſtial Love*, in oppoſition to that which he calls Δημώδης, which is the ſame with that Paſſion commonly ſignify'd by the Name of Love, *viz.* a deſire of Corporal Contact ariſing from the ſight of Beauty. This laſt indeed, is a very vile, brutiſh, unmanly Affection; and ſuch, as conſidering the vileneſs of our Bodies, one would think a Man could never be Charm'd into without the Magic of a *Love-potion*. But the former is an Angelical Affection; for certainly, Beauty is a Divine Thing; It is (as the *Platonic Author* ſays of Wiſdom) *the pure Influence flowing from the Glory of the Almighty, and the Brightneſs of the Everlaſting Light*; or in *Plato*'s own words, *A Ray of God*. And therefore the Love of abſtract Beauty, muſt needs be a very generous and divine Affection. Sir, I could be more large in my Account, but I conſider what 'tis I Write, and to whom; and therefore I think it high time to remit you to your own Thoughts, ſome of which I hope will be, that I *am in a very* eminent degree of Friendſhip,

Yours

J. Norris.

A Letter

A Letter concerning Love and Muſick.

SIR,

1. TO the firſt of your Enquiries concerning the true Idea of Love, and particularly that between Man and Woman, and wherein it ſtands diſtinguiſh'd from Luſt, my Anſwer in ſhort is this. That Love may be conſider'd either barely as a Tendency toward Good, or as a willing this *Good* to ſomething capable of it. If Love be taken in the firſt Senſe, 'tis what we call *Deſire*; if in the ſecond, 'tis what we call *Charity*, or *Benevolence*.

2. Then as to *Deſire*, there is either an Intellectual or a Senſual Deſire, which denomination is not here taken from the Faculty, but from the Quality of the Object. That I call here an Intellectual Deſire, whoſe Object is an Intellectual Good, and that a Senſual Deſire, whoſe Object is a Senſual Good. And this is that which *Plato* meant by his two *Cupids*. The later of theſe is what we call Luſt.

3. But then this again ſignifies either abſtractly and indifferently, *viz.* a bare deſire of Corporal Pleaſure, or elſe concretely and immorally, *viz.* a deſire or longing after Corporeal Pleaſure in forbidden and unlawful inſtances.

4. Theſe things being thus briefly premiſed, my next Reſolution is this: That the Ordinary Paſſion of Love, that which we mean when we ſay, ſuch

a Man, or ſuch a Woman is in Love, is no other than plain Luſt, if Luſt be taken according to the firſt ſignification; namely, for a ſenſual Deſire, or a Tendency toward a ſenſual Good. But if Luſt be taken in the later ſenſe, as a Tendency to Corporeal Pleaſure in unlawful inſtances, that which our Saviour meant when he ſaid, *He that looks upon a Woman to Luſt after her*, &c. Then 'tis not neceſſary that the Paſſion we here ſpeak of ſhould be Luſt, becauſe then 'twould be a Sin to be in Love, and conſequently, there would be a neceſſity of Sinning in order to Marriage; becauſe no Man is ſuppoſed to Marry, but whom he thus Loves.

5. And now to your ſecond Enquiry, Whether Muſick be a Senſual or Intellectual Pleaſure: Before this can be determin'd, the Idea of a Senſual and Intellectual Pleaſure muſt be ſtated.

6. And Firſt, I obſerve, That the preciſe difference of a Senſual Pleaſure cannot conſiſt in this, That the Body be pleaſed, or gratefully affected; nor of an Intellectual, That the Mind be pleaſed. For by reaſon of the ſtrict Union of Soul and Body, one ſo ſympathizes with the other, that theſe Pleaſures are always Mutual, and complicated. So that there is no Pleaſure of Mind that does not alſo recreate the Body; and no Pleaſure of Body, but whereof the Mind has its ſhare. And thus far there is agreement and reciprocation. That then which is peculiar and diſcriminative, muſt be taken from the Primarineſs and Secondarineſs of the Perception. That Pleaſure therefore is an Intellectual Pleaſure, when the Soul is primarily and immediately affected, and the Body only Secondarily, and by Participation.

cipation. And that is a Senſual Pleaſure, when the Body is primarily and immediately affected, and the Soul only ſecondarily, and by Participation.

7. Now according to this Meaſure we muſt of neceſſity define the Pleaſure of hearing Muſick to be properly Intellectual. Becauſe the Soul is the Part that is then primarily and immediately affected, and the Body only by reſult. And that for this evident Reaſon, becauſe Muſick conſiſting formally in Proportion, and Proportion pleaſing only as underſtood, that part muſt be primarily and directly pleaſed, which is capable of underſtanding. But this is not the Body, but the Soul. 'Tis true indeed, the Ear may be directly pleaſed by a ſingle Sound, as the Eye is recreated by a ſingle Colour (ſuppoſe *Green*) and this I grant to be a Pleaſure of Senſe as much as Smelling or Taſting, though not ſo groſs. But the Ear may no more properly be ſaid to be pleaſed with the Proportion of Sounds, or with Sounds as Proportionate, than the Eye is with a Picture.

8. If it be here objected, That Muſick is a Pleaſure of Senſe, becauſe 'tis convey'd by the Ear; I reply, That if this be ſufficient to make a Pleaſure Senſual, the moſt Intellectual Pleaſures we are here capable of may be call'd Senſual; as reading fine Diſcourſes, Contemplating the Beauty of the Creation, attending to Mathematical Diagrams, and the like; becauſe all theſe as well as Muſick, are enjoyed by the *Mediation* of the Senſes.

9. But it matters not though the Senſes be the *Inſtruments of Conveyance*, ſo the Soul be the Part directly and primarily affected; which is the Caſe

here. For though the Ear may be pleaſed with thoſe ſingle Sounds, which with relation to each other are really Harmonical, yet it is not, it cannot be pleaſed with them as ſuch, or in that Formality. This is the ſole Priviledge of the Mind, which as it can only judge of, ſo is it only capable of being pleas'd with Harmony.

10. And thus, Sir, you have my Sentiments, with as much Brevity and Clearneſs as I could uſe, and it may be, as the Matters would bear. I have now nothing further to add, but to renew the Aſſurances of my being

Your Friend and Servant

J. N.

A Letter

A Letter concerning Friendſhip.

SIR,

1. TO your Queſtion, Whether in propriety of ſpeaking, there may be a *ſtrict Friendſhip* between a Man and his Wife? I anſwer firſt, that the ſolution of this Queſtion depends upon another, *viz.* What are the Requiſites eſſentially neceſſary to the Exerciſe of Friendſhip? and this Queſtion likewiſe depends upon another, *viz.* What is the true Notion or Idea of Friendſhip? This being rightly ſtated, 'twill be eaſie to diſcern what are the eſſential Requiſites; and conſequently, whether Man and Wife are capable Terms in this Relation or no?

2. Now as to the Idea of Friendſhip, I anſwer firſt in general, That Friendſhip is nothing elſe but *Benevolence* or *Charity*, under ſome certain Modifications, or accidental Circumſtances. Accidental I mean as to Charity, though neceſſary and eſſential to Friendſhip. And thus far I think all Moraliſts are agreed. But now what theſe certain Modifications are, here they begin to be divided. 'Twould be too tedious a work to inſiſt here upon the variety of other Men's Opinions; and therefore I ſhall only briefly deliver my own, which is, That all the Modifications of Charity neceſſary to the Conſtitution of Friendſhip, may be well enough reduced to theſe three: 1. That it be in a ſpecial manner *intenſe*.

2*ly*.

2*ly*. That it be *mutual*; and 3*ly*. That it be *manifeſt*, or *mutually known*. Charity, when cloathed with theſe three Modifications, immediately commences Friendſhip. More than theſe it need not have, but of theſe not one may be ſpared, as will eaſily appear, if you examine them ſeverally.

3. Now from this Idea of Friendſhip 'tis very obvious to deduce what are the Requiſites neceſſary to Friendſhip, not in reference to its Idea (for that's already ſtated) but in reference to its Exiſtence and actual Exerciſe, that is, in one word, what are thoſe Diſpoſitions or Aptneſſes in the Subject, whether as to Perſon, State, or Condition; which may render it capable of Friendſhip, according to the forementioned Idea. Now, I ſay, what theſe are may be eaſily Collected from the Idea it ſelf, as will appear if we conſider it diſtinctly, according to thoſe three Modifications; and by applying the Genius to each of them. For 1*ſt*. whereas Friendſhip is ſaid to be Charity in a ſpecial manner *intenſe*, hence I collect Firſt, That it cannot be but between good Men, becauſe an ill Man cannot have any true Charity, much leſs ſuch an *intenſe* degree of it, as is requiſite to Friendſhip. So that *Virtue in general* is one Requiſite. 2*ly*. Hence I collect, That a Friend muſt not be only according to the Character *Lucan* gives of *Cato* ----- *rigidi ſervator honeſti, rigidly virtuous and honeſt*; but he muſt be alſo χρηστὸς ἀνὴρ, a Man of a liberal, ſweet, obliging Temper; one of thoſe good Men of whom 'tis ſaid in Scripture, (by way of contradiſtinction to the Righteous, or rigidly Honeſt) that ſome would even dare to *dye* for them. For tho I may have *Com-*

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mon Charity; nay more, a great *Eſteem* for a Man of plain Honeſty and Integrity, yet I can never love him with that *ſpecial intenſeneſs* of Affection which belongs to *Friendſhip*, unleſs he be alſo of a beneficent, kind and obſequious Temper. So that *good Nature* is another requiſite. 3*ly*. Hence I collect, That there muſt be alſo (at leaſt in a competent proportion) an *agreeableneſs of humours* and *manners*; for unleſs the materials be of an apt and correſpondent *figure*, the Building can neither be *compact* nor *laſting*; ſo that *likeneſs of diſpoſition* is another Requiſite. 4. Hence I collect, That true Friendſhip cannot be among *many*. For ſince our Faculties are of a *finite* Energy, 'tis impoſſible our Love can be very intenſe when divided among many. No, the Rays muſt be *contracted* to make them *burn*. So that another Requiſite is, that the Terms of this Relation be *few in Number*.

4. Theſe are all the Requiſites that I can think of at preſent deducible from the firſt Part of the *Idea*, (*viz*. Charity in a ſpecial manner intenſe:) As for Fidelity in retaining Secrets, conſtancy of Adherence, and the like, I think they are virtually included in the firſt Requiſite; it being hardly conceivable how a Man can be good and virtuous that wants them. But if you think the Reduction not ſo obvious, you may if you pleaſe, add them here in the fifth place as diſtinct Requiſites; 'twill be all one. Thus far of the Requiſites deducible from the firſt Part.

5. To proceed. Whereas it is further ſaid, that Friendſhip is a Benevolence that's *Mutual*, there is but one general Requiſite deducible from this, which

is,

is, that all the other be found in both (or if more) in all the Peſons ſuppoſed to be Friends. The third of which importing *Relation*, will of neceſſity be ſo; for all *Similitude* is *mutual*. Laſtly, Whereas 'tis ſaid that Friendſhip is a Benevolence *mutually known*, all that will be Requiſite upon this Head is, that the Perſons who are to be confederated in this Union, have ſuch opportunities of Converſe or Correſpondence, that they may be ſatisfy'd of the *Degree* and *Reality* of each others Love.

6. Having thus ſtated the *Idea of Friendſhip*, and from thence deduced all the neceſſary qualifications in the ſubject for its *entertainment*, I think I may now from the Premiſes, venture to affirm, That there may be *ſtrict Friendſhip* between *Man and Wife*. For, which of theſe Requiſites is it that they muſt *neceſſarily* want? As for your Objection taken from their *inequality*, I grant Equality is wanting both as to *Sex* and as to *Conjugal Relation*; but neither is *all* Equality *neceſſary*. 'Tis not abſolutely neceſſary that Friends ſhould ſtand upon a *Level*, either in reſpect of Fortune, State or Condition. This ſort of Equality I grant, is a *good Preparative* for a more eaſie *Introduction* of Friendſhip; and 'tis alſo advantagious to the *laſtingneſs* of it; but yet 'tis diſpenſable. 'Tis like levelling the Ground betwixt two Rivers, it makes way for a more eaſie Union; but yet 'tis poſſible from *Earthquakes*, *Floods*, or other Contingencies, they may be united without it. The only Equality that is neceſſary, is an Equality of *Diſpoſitions*, an Harmony of *Affections*; but this may be in Perſons of *unequal Fortunes* and Conditions. I confeſs, there can be no ſuch thing as Friend-

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ſhip between Perſons of different Quality, if the Superiour takes *advantage* of his *Preheminence* or Authority; for then 'tis true what the Poet ſays, *Si vis Sexte coli, non amabo.*

7. But then 'tis not the being *inveſted* with Superiority that is inconſiſtent with Friendſhip, (for then Kings, who have no Equals but thoſe of *other Kingdoms*, with whom they cannot intimately Converſe, would be the miſerableſt Creatures alive) but the *habitual uſe* and *exerciſe* of it, and the ſtanding upon its *Privileges.*

8. But there is no neceſſity that it ſhould be ſo. *Friendſhip* may *level* thoſe whom *Fortune* has made *unequal*; and the greateſt *Monarch* in the World may find Opportunities to deſcend from the Throne of Majeſty to the familiar Careſſes of a *dear Favorite:* and *unking* himſelf a while for the more glorious Title of *Friend.* 'Tis but to apply this to the particular Caſe in hand, and you have a Solution to your Queſtion. And now Sir, from the *Theory* of Friendſhip, I ſhall moſt readily deſcend to the *Practice* of it, whenever you pleaſe to employ the Service of

(Dear Sir)

Your moſt real Friend and Servant

J. NORRIS.

The

The Copy of a Letter written to my Friend F.B. *concerning the Death of my Dear Neece* M. C.

My Dear Friend,

1. SInce 'tis one of the Happineſſes of Friendſhip to Communicate Sorrow, as well as to Share in Joy; that the one may be increas'd, and the other diminiſh'd, I cannot but betake my ſelf to this eaſy Refuge; being at preſent in ſuch a Condition, as will need more Relief and Support, than I can either give to my ſelf, or receive from others.

2. The Truth is, ſhould I indulge my Paſſion, I might find perhaps as much Cauſe as he that did it, To Curſe the Day of my Nativity. My pretty little Dear Neece and Scholar; She whom I loved, admired, and delighted in; She for whoſe ſake I once thought Life, as now I think Death, a Bleſſing: She (how ſhall I bring out that diſmal word) is Dead.

3. She is; and has left a ſtrange Emptineſs in my Soul, (ſo large was the Room which She took up there) which nothing of this World's Good can ever fill. I muſt needs own, that I never was ſo deeply Affected with any Trouble in my Life; nor did I ever think that it could be in the Power of any Temporal Loſs, ſo much to diſcompoſe and unſpirit

unſpirit my Soul. It is not a tranſient Guſt of Paſſion, which like a little Cloud, would either ſoon Blow over, or ſpend it ſelf in a momentary Shower; but 'tis with my Mind, as with the Face of the Sky when 'tis all ſet to Rain. Were it only an Affection of the *Senſitive* and *Animal* Part, it would ſoon vaniſh like the phantaſtic Colours of the Rain-bow; but my Grief is of a more malignant kind, and penetrates even into the very Center of my Soul. 'Tis lodg'd (as *Lipſius* I remember emphatically phraſes it) *in ipſa animi mente*, 'tis an *in-grain'd*, *rational*, and *judicious* Sorrow.

4. I lament not on her account; (for I cannot, without reflecting upon the Divine Goodneſs, queſtion the Happy State of one who was nothing but Innocence and Sweetneſs) but purely upon my own. And that I do in ſuch a meaſure that ----- but 'tis in vain to go about to expreſs it; for I lov'd her as I lov'd my own Soul; and however my Sorrow may be blam'd for her now, yet I'm ſure my Love for her could not.

5. For ſhe was a Perſon (and you know I am not over-prone to *admire*) ſo peculiarly Accompliſh'd, as if Nature had deſign'd nothing elſe in her Compoſition, but to make one *on purpoſe* to be *belov'd*. As for her outward Form, ſhe was one of the ſtudied and elaborate Pieces of Nature; and by the very Air of her Countenance, was markt out for an extraordinary Soul to inhabit in. Nor was the Jewel unworthy of the Caſe; for certainly ſhe had as excellent a Spirit (one only excepted) as ever condeſcended to wear Human Fleſh. Her Parts were miraculous, and extraordinary; ſo extraordinary,

traordinary, that had not the Youth and Verdancy of her Face contradicted the ripeneſs of her Diſcourſings, you would have thought her well in years.

6. And though Art had little more to do where Nature had been ſo eminently Liberal, yet ſo Covetous was ſhe, as well as Capable of Improvement, as if ſhe meant to graſp all manner of Knowledge, and leave nothing to a Future State to add to her Accompliſh'd Soul. And indeed 'tis too incredible to be related, conſidering the ſhortneſs of the time, (for her Pulſe had not beat Thirteen Years) what a wondrous progreſs her Active Soul had made. Thus far only I ſhall venture in general, That had ſhe lived to be as Ripe in Years, as ſhe was in Parts and ingenious Attainments, ſhe would have been the Envy of her Sex, and the Wonder of Mankind.

7. But yet the former of theſe would have been much abated by her admirable *ſweetneſs* and *good Nature*. A Quality as of it ſelf moſt excellent, ſo that wherein ſhe moſt excell'd. And herein I muſt beg leave of all that I ever convers'd with, to declare, that I never obſerv'd in any, ſuch a free, generous, obliging, and diſintereſs'd Temper, which mightily ſweetned and recommended her Parts, and made her not not only admirable, but lovely.

8. And beſides all this, there were in her (as in Poetry) many *errantes abditæque veneres*, wandring and hidden Graces that want a Name, and unexpreſſable Prettineſſes; which yet were ſtrangely moving, and of a charming influence. I am not Conſcious to my ſelf of any partial Fondneſs, or Rhetorical Affectation in any one part of this Character,

racter, but as near as I can do ſpeak the genuine, unprejudiced ſenſe of my Soul. I hate to flatter the *living*, much more the *dead*, whoſe Names are as Sacred to me as their Sepulchers. My only fault here (if any) is in the *defect*; for ſhe was as much too good to be ſufficiently commended, as to to be long enjoy'd.

9. And now (ſetting aſide that particular reſpect which ſhe ever bleſt and honour'd me with) how can I chuſe but be very paſſionately concern'd for the loſs of ſuch a rare and every way Accompliſh'd Perſon! I cannot, and methinks when I ſurvey the *ſuddain ruin* of my pleaſant, but ſhort-lived Gourd, I can hardly forbear juſtifying my Grief, as the inraged Prophet did his Anger, and like him am tempted to ſay, *I do well to be ſorrowful.*

10. But I muſt not be ſo ill a Pilot, as now the Floods of Paſſion ariſe, to throw away my Tackling, commit my Veſſel to the Winds, and run along with the Tempeſt; *ſatis naturæ datum eſt, jam & Ratio ſuum aſſerat Principatum.* For my Ship begins to be cover'd with the Waves, and therefore 'tis now high time to awake Reaſon from her dead Sleep, that ſhe may rebuke the Winds and the Sea, that they may be *calm and ſtill.* 'Tis dangerous to indulge any longer; the Tumult of the Paſſions runs high, and the unruly Faction preſſes hard upon the Gate of the Palace; 'tis therefore time for the Soveraign Faculty to come forth in her Imperial Robes, and ſuppreſs the Mutiny.

11. In order therefore to the quieting of my Paſſions, and the reſettlement of my diſcompos'd

Soul, I conſider, Firſt, That *Grief* is the moſt abſurd and ſenſleſs of all the Paſſions, yea of all the things in the World, and utterly unbecoming a Creature that makes the leaſt Pretenſion to Reaſon. Becauſe 'tis reſolvable into no rational Principle; for whatever is ſo, muſt be, or at leaſt appear to be either an End or a Means: But this can pretend to neither. Not to be an End, for nothing is ſo but what is Good; but this is in *no reſpect good*, and in *many reſpects evil*. Not to be a Means, becauſe it effects nothing, but is altogether vain and fruitleſs. And indeed it cannot but be ſo, becauſe 'tis of a thing paſt, which even to Omnipotence it ſelf is impoſſible to be alter'd. Our other Paſſions are to ſome Purpoſe, and aim at ſome End. *Love* to *enjoy*, *Anger* to *revenge*, *Fear* to *avoid*, and the like; But this Paſſion, Grief, ſerves to no end or purpoſe in the World; and it cannot be its *own end*, becauſe (as I ſaid before) it is in no reſpect Good. It is therefore utterly abſurd and unreaſonable.

12. Again I conſider, That ſuppoſe Grief were not ſo vain and ineffective a thing as 'tis, but that it could make ſome alteration in things; yet it cannot alter any one Event for the better; and therefore to what purpoſe ſhould I indulge it? For ſince we acknowledge a Being of an infinite Wiſdom, Power and Goodneſs to ſit at the Helm of the Univerſe, it muſt be conſequently acknowledg'd, that the Courſe of this World is ſteer'd to the beſt advantage of the whole; and however ignorant we may be how to juſtify particular *Phenomena's*, yet we muſt (if we will be conſiſtent with our former Conceſſion) at leaſt *implicitly* believe that all things

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are as well as they can poſſibly be. Certain it is (whatever ſome *Male-contents* may think) the World is *govern'd* with as much Wiſdom as 'twas made; and as the Natural World ſtood the Teſt of the Divine Criticiſm, ſo will the Moral One too. God upon review would pronounce this as Good as he did the other, and why ſhould not we? yea we ſhould, if we could ſee this excellent *Drama* from end to end as he does; we ſhould then diſcern that all thoſe Diſpenſations, which ſeparately taken, appear harſh and unequal, yet in Concatenation and together, conſpire to the Beauty and Intereſt of the whole. This will be our Portion hereafter; in the mean time 'twill be our greateſt Wiſdom to truſt that of God, and believe that implicitly as to the thing, which we cannot diſcern as to the manner. And this I take to be the moſt rational foundation of Reſignation and Acquieſcence in the Divine Pleaſure, which is grounded upon a Conſideration of his infinite Wiſdom and Goodneſs. When we reſolve our Wills into his, merely for this reaſon, becauſe we pay ſo much deference to his Perfections, as to think, that if we knew as much as he, we ſhould not wiſh things to be otherwiſe than they are. And this is highly ſpecify'd in the Saints in Heaven, who through that near and intimate View which they have of God's *Perfections*, are ſo intirely conformable to his Will, that they can diſpence not only with the *eternal loſs*, but Damnation of their Friends, without the leaſt Grief or Reſentment. I confeſs, this eminency of Reſignation is no more attainable in this Life, than any other part of Celeſtial Happineſs; but yet an heedful and attentive Meditation

of this Argument may do much towards it; And however difficult it be to reduce it to Practice, yet 'tis moſt certain in the Theory, that granting the ſuperintendency of an infinite and unprejudic'd Underſtanding; and that every Calamity is (as *Euripides* ſomewhere calls it) συμφορὰ διὸλατος, ſent from God, to grieve at any Misfortune is to grieve that things are as they ſhould be. Which is, one would think, too abſurd for him to be guilty of who is defined to be a *Rational Creature.*

13. Again I conſider, That as that which I call an Affliction is (as certainly as God is Wiſe and Good) for the beſt in reference to the *whole Syſteme of things*; ſo for all that I know it may be moſt conducive to *my Intereſt in particular.* In as much, as by it I may either *obtain a greater good*, or *avoid a greater evil.* Thus a Shipwrack made *Zeno* a Philoſopher, and the Meſſenger of Satan proved an Antidote to the great Apoſtle againſt Pride and Vanity of Spirit. And perhaps there was in me ſome Evil and unmortify'd Quality or other, of ſo malignant a Nature that it could not be cured by a leſs ſevere Application. For certainly God is not ſo ill a Phyſitian, as not to weigh the Ingredients of his Bitter Cup, before he mingles it into a *draught*, that it may be proportionable to the ſtrength of the Diſeaſe, as well as of the Patient.

14. Again I conſider, That as this Affliction may be one of the Arrows of Love, and in the deſignation of God be intended for my particular Good, ſo 'tis moſt certain that by wiſe Conduct I may extract Good out of it if I will, and turn it to my greater advantage. *Plato* I remember ſomewhere

where compares the Life of Man to a Game at Tables. And indeed the compariſon is worthy the Wiſdom of its Author, and full of myſtic and important Truth. For as *there* what *Caſt* we ſhall have is not in our power; but to manage it well, that is: So is it with Man in the Concerns of Life. 'Twas not in my power whether this Affliction ſhould befall me or not; but 'tis in my power to manage it for my advantage now it has befall'n me. I can uſe it as an Opportunity of ſhewing my Virtue, as an Occaſion of withdrawing my Affections from the World, conſidering the uncertainty of the beſt Objects of it, of increaſing my Love to God, and his Love to me here, and his Rewards to me hereafter. And to this purpoſe I conſider the Story of *Abraham*, who for his readineſs to part with his beloved Son at the demand of God, became the Favorite and Friend of his Maker, and obtain'd this emphatical Promiſe from him, *In bleſſing I will bleſs thee.*

15. Again I conſider, That although by the loſs of this excellent Creature a great Breach be made upon my Happineſs, yet the remainder of what I enjoy is much greater than the Evil which I ſuffer; ſo that upon the whole, the Scale weighs down for Happineſs. My Condition is ſtill better than that of many others, who yet think themſelves Happy. And therefore for me to pine and lament, becauſe I am not ſo Happy as I was, or may be, becomes neither the Philoſophy of a Scholar, nor the Humility of a Chriſtian; and upon the ſame Principle I may continue to Lament even when I am in Heaven. Rather let me adore the

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Bounty of God for filling my Cup ſo full, than be diſcontented becauſe it does not run over.

16. Again I conſider with the great Apoſtle, that *the time is ſhort*, and that therefore I ſhould *weep as if I wept not*. 'Twill not be long e're I ſhall enjoy the Beatific Viſion of God, and (if after that the fruition of any Creature can be of any moment) the Society of even this dear Perſon. In the mean while I have one Artifice more whereby to ſolace my ſelf, and that is, by entertaining the ſame apprehenſion of what I enjoy, as I ſhould do if I did not enjoy it. I think with my ſelf, how miſerable ſhould I be if I wanted ſeveral of thoſe Bleſſings which I have, particularly if I had not been bred a Scholar, and thereby been qualify'd to be my own Comforter. And by Virtue of this Conſideration, I ſet a higher value upon what I enjoy, and conſequently find the leſs miſs of what I do not.

17. This is my *Conſolatio Philoſophica*, whereby I allay and fix the violent Fermentation of my Paſſions. To which I might add many popular Arguments, as that 'tis as natural to Dye as to be Born; that 'tis incident not only to Man, but to the *whole Creation, the faſhion of this world paſſes away*; that 'tis envious to think that *our loſs* which is our *Friend's gain*; that occaſions of Grief in this World are many, and therefore not ſingly to be much lamented; that 'tis a ſhame for Reaſon not to be able to conquer that which muſt at length yield to time, and the like. But theſe I ſhall be content only to mention, partly becauſe I don't fancy much to be *Topical*, and partly becauſe I think my *other ſupports* ſtrong enough to bear the ſtreſs of the moſt *weighty ſorrow*.

18. And

18. And now the reſult of all theſe Conſiderations is this: I am fully and entirely ſatisfy'd with the Accompliſhment of the Divine Pleaſure, and though before 'twas my hearty Prayer, that (if poſſible) *this Cup might paſs from me*, yet I now as chearfully ſubſcribe to the other Clauſe, *Nevertheleſs, not as I will, but as thou wilt.* I am throughly convinc'd, both of the abſurdity and undecency of my former Sorrow, and though not ſo much a *Stoic* as to condemn all the Paſſions, yet I do this of Grief as freely as any of that rigid School, and therefore will no longer *defile my ſelf for the Dead*, Lev. 21. 1. If any Grief can now be reaſonable, it muſt be becauſe I have griev'd ſo much; for I am Conſcious that I have thereby exceedingly betray'd the greatneſs of my Soul. *Homer* indeed thought it not unworthy the Character of his great Hero *Achilles*, to bring him in paſſionately bewailing the Death of *Patroclus*. His expreſſion (as I remember) is *Smerdaleon d' Hoimozen, He wept hideouſly.* But certainly our Saviour was of another Mind, when he ſaid to his Diſciples upon the occaſion of his own Death (and certainly if any thing could juſtifie Sorrow, that would) *Let not your Hearts be troubled.*

19. But yet after all, I muſt needs ſay, though I have pretty well by this time argued my Paſſions into a Calm, That 'tis a great Venture to Love any thing well in this World; and that I am reſolv'd for the ſake of this dear Perſon, never to ingage my Paſſions very far in the Love of any thing again,

Quic-

Quicquid amat cupias non placuiſſe nimis.

Shall be my *Motto* as long as I live; and I will follow the excellent Rule of the Royal Philoſopher, *M. Antoninus*, *Aploſon ſeauton*, and reduce my ſelf as near as I can to a Simplicity, and delight in as few things as may be. So ſhall I *more undividedly* adhere to my *laſt and beſt End*, and lye leſs at the mercy of Fortune.

20. But (Sir) however I contract my Love, you may aſſure your ſelf of the ſame room you ever had in the Affections of

Your true Friend

J. Norris.

FINIS.

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